Part II.—THE HISTORY OF THE BAHRAIN ISLANDS.

175 Of all the Persian Gulf shaikhdoms the Bahrain islands have had by far the most interesting and varied history, of which this brief outline must of necessity mention only the most outstanding events. The riches of Bahrain's ancient pearling industry have drawn the attention of many rulers to the islands, whose strategic position and fresh-water springs have meant that for centuries there has been a settled population.

101 175 It is believed that the names Niduk-ki and Dilmun (or Tilwun) which appear in Babylonian and Assyrian inscriptions found in Iraq were the ancient names of the Bahrain islands, in which case events in Bahrain's history are recorded from the third millennium B.C., as long as 5,000 years ago.

Unfortunately only one cuneiform inscription has been found in Bahrain itself, an inscription which has been translated as follows: "The Palace of Rimugus, the servant of Inzaq (Mercury) of the tribe of Aqiru."[1]

This inscription appears to have been removed from a Bahrain mosque by its finder, Captain Durand, and its present whereabouts is unknown.

[171] The place-name Niduk-ki appears in the Babylonian myth of the Creation, while the Assyrians also had a tradition that their civilisation, and more especially the invention of the cuneiform script, originated in Dilmun. The tumuli of Bahrain bear a very striking resemblance to Phoenician graves, a fact noticed by many writers from the time of Strabo to the present day. Archaeologists who have studied them are, however, still unable to agree as to their origin beyond saying that they are of great antiquity.

175 The first historical reference to Bahrain appears in an inscription concerning the conquests of Sargon of Akkad, who reigned in the third millennium B.C. In this inscription he is described as having reduced Niduk-ki and another seaport, and during the following centuries there are many references to Niduk-ki and Dilmun, giving the impression that the places referred to were both islands and trading centres. In 1820 B.C. a king of Larsa, in Southern Mesopotamia, sent a trading expedition to Bahrain, obtaining there stone, metals, wood and ivory, materials probably brought to Bahrain from India. Towards the end of the eighth century B.C. another Sargon, the Assyrian monarch also gained control of Dilmun by means of threats and economic pressure, and we have an interesting description of the contemporary Bahraini ruler: "Uperi, king of Dilmun, who lives like a fish, thirty double hours away in the midst of the sea of the rising sun, heard of my lordly might and brought his gifts."

1 [For footnote see Cat. 116, p. 87 -- Analyst]

The inhabitants of Dilmun also sent tribute to Sennacherib the son of Sargon, after he had sent them some of the debris of Babylon, which he had destroyed, as a sign of the fate in store for cities that incurred his displeasure.

After the fall of the Assyrian empire in the seventh century B.C. we hear no more about Bahrain until the time of the Macedonian adventure in the East, when Alexander sent three vessels on voyages of exploration down the Arabian coast of the Persian Gulf. Two ships under the commands of Archias and Androsthenes sailed only as far as the island of Tylos, which has been identified with Bahrain. Later Roman geographers seem to have become somewhat confused in their descriptions of the Persian Gulf, and while Arrian applies the name of Tylos to Bahrain, on the map of Ptolemy Bahrain appears as Ichara and Tylus and Arathus are shown at the mouth of the Persian Gulf. Whatever were the ancient names of Bahrain, it is interesting to note that the name Aradus is still applied to part of Muharraq in the Arabic form *Arad*.

After the fall of the Mesopotamian civilisations no foreign power seems to have controlled Eastern Arabia until early in the fourth century A.D., when Arab tribes from that area raided Fars and sacked many of its cities. The young Sassanid king Shapur II repelled the invaders and carried the campaign into their own territories. He landed on the Arabian coast and annexed East Arabia and Bahrain to Persia, which acquisitions were later placed under the authority of the King of Hira, an Arab buffer state on the south-west border of Sassanid Persia.

THE COMING OF ISLAM

A somewhat confusing aspect of the history of Bahrain is the change in nomenclature which took place in the Persian Gulf during Portuguese activity there. From the third to the sixteenth century, the name "Bahrain" was applied to the whole coast of Eastern Arabia from Kuwait to Qatar, while the main Bahrain island was known as *Awal*, but since the last date the name "Bahrain" has been applied to the islands. In the following passages the modern names will be used to simplify matters.

When the first Moslems came to Eastern Arabia they found there a people strangely mixed in their beliefs. There were Christians and Jews, Zoroastrians who followed the state religion of Sassanid Persia, and pagan Arab Bedouin. The local governor for the Persians was a Christian Arab, Mundhir bin Sawa by name, and according to Syrian Christian records of the late seventh century, there were in Arabia at this time five Nestorian bishops, one of whom appears to have been bishop of the Bahrain islands. The Christian viceroy and many of his Court accepted Islam, but on his death, and again on the death of the Prophet Muhammad, the bedouin, who made up the bulk of converts, if indeed they had really been converted, "apostasized," and it required expeditions from Medina to restore the country to the Moslems.

175 For the next 350 years Bahrain and Eastern Arabia were ruled by governors on behalf of the Caliphs, but from time to time there were politico-religious revolts against the central authority, and both Shia and Kharajite schismatics sought refuge on the Bahrain islands, where for short periods they were able to defy the power of the Caliphs. Isolated by the sea from the rest of Arabia, Bahrain was often, during its history, the refuge of political and religious fugitives.

The Servile War that ravaged lower Iraq during the second half of the ninth century also detached Bahrain from the Caliphate, and although on the fall of the Slave State the Caliph regained some of his former territories, a power was shortly to appear which finally removed both Bahrain and the mainland from his control.

THE CARMATHIANS[2]

An offspring of the extreme Ismaili sect, but with many other contributing features, the Carmathian movement was most successful in Eastern Arabia where a State was established with its capital at al-Mu'miniyah. The Carmathian rule in East Arabia was probably beneficial for the inhabitants of this area which during most of its history played the part of a neglected border province and which was now the centre of an empire. The success of the new belief in Arabia at the turn of the ninth and tenth centuries has been partly explained by the presence in East Arabia of a number of Magians and Jews, happy to aid any power hostile to the Caliphs, and also of the Arab tribesmen, who resented authority and were delighted to raid their neighbours in the name of the Carmathians.

The first Carmathian ruler was Abu Sa'id al-Jannabi, and it was during his reign that in 903 the Carmathians seized Hajar many of whose inhabitants fled to the Bahrain islands; while under Abu Tahir, Abu Sa'id's son and successor, the Carmathians shocked the Moslem world by sacking Mecca and removing the Black Stone from the Ka'aba to their capital, where it remained for thirty years. It is not known when the Carmathians occupied the Bahrain islands, but while they were in them they put them to good use. Not only did they send exiles there, but also established on the islands a customs station, from which they levied taxes on Arabian Gulf shipping ; in addition they received half the proceeds of the pearling industry.

THE ARAB DYNASTIES

About the year 1058 Abu-l-Bahlul, a leading inhabitant of the Bahrain islands, revolted against Carmathian rule and made himself prince ; he defeated a Carmathian army sent against him and appealed to the Caliph in Baghdad for aid and recognition, but shortly after his victory he was driven from Bahrain by the Ruler of Qatif, Yahya b. 'Abbas. War followed between the successors of Yahya and Abdulla al-Ayuni, who had succeeded the Carmathians in Hasa, in which the latter triumphed and seized Bahrain, which he and his family ruled for many years. Little is known about Ayuni rule in Bahrain, but in 1154

[p.78]

2 [For footnote see cat.116, p.87--Anal.]

175 we have a description of Bahrain left by the famous Arabo-Spanish geographer Idrisi. After giving a remarkably accurate description of the islands, in which he describes in detail the method of pearl diving, the agriculture and the various fresh-water springs and pools, he records the apparently Utopian state of the administration :

"The island is governed by an independent chief. The inhabitants of the two banks are satisfied with his justice and his piety, and when he dies he is replaced by a person who equals him in virtue and justice."[3]

Although Idrisi says the chief is independent, he qualifies this by stating that the Governor of Qais, himself a tributary of the Caliph at Baghdad, received tribute from Bahrain. A number of Arab writers have left us descriptions of Bahrain in the fourteenth century, a period in which the islands changed hands many times. In 1346 Bahrain appears in story of the struggle between the ruler of Hormuz, Kutb ed-Din, and his nephews, in which the latter take refuge in the islands, and in the following year we have the first reference to Manama when the Hormuz ruler visited the town. In 1384 there was a war between the ruler of Bahrain and Qatif, independent at this time, and the ruler of Qais island, in which the latter was victorious and received in the peace settlement a number of Bahrain islands and an annual tribute of 500 dinars.

Early in the fifteenth century Bahrain was united with Qatif and Hasa under Shaikh Ibrahim al-Maliki, but previous to the year 1475 the islands were under the control of Hormuz, and in this year they were granted to a certain Agwad b. Samigh in return for the aid he had given the ruler of Hormuz in capturing the islands from his brothers. In 1487 the tyrannical reign of Agwad's son was terminated by an Omani invasion of Bahrain, when 'Umar b. al-Khattab was appointed governor.

THE PORTUGUESE[4]

The voyages of Vasco da Gama and other Portuguese mariners towards the end of the fifteenth and the start of the sixteenth century resulted in the opening up of the Persian Gulf to European ships, and in 1507 the Portuguese, under Alfonso de Albuquerque, conquered Hormuz and set about developing it into a great trading centre. The first sign of Portuguese interest in Bahrain was the visit there, in 1514, of de Albuquerque, but his only act was to confirm existing treaties between the local shaikh and the king of Hormuz, who had been retained by the Portuguese as a "puppet" ruler ; however, he also took a great interest in the pearl industry and realized its possible value to Portugal. Some time after this visit Mukarram, king of Hasa and son-in-law of the Shaikh of Mecca, seized Bahrain and Qatif from Hormuz, and in 1521 the king of Hormuz gave the loss of Bahrain as his reason for failing to pay the agreed sum of tribute to his Portuguese overlords. This loss of revenue and the interference caused to trade between Iraq and Hormuz by the ships of Mukarram angered the Portuguese, and the governor of Hormuz, Diego Lopez, despatched

3 + 4 [For footnotes see ed. 116, p. 87 -- Analyst]

175 a fleet against Bahrain under his nephew Antonio Correa. The Portuguese fleet was accompanied by another sent by the Ruler of Hormuz under his vezir, Rais Sherif. After having been delayed by storms, the fleet arrived at Bahrain and the Portuguese set about attacking the defenders. Although the Hormuzi force stood aloof until they were sure the Portuguese were gaining the upper hand, the Europeans finally triumphed. Mukarram was wounded and died a few days later; the remains of his army fled to the mainland, whither they were pursued by Rais Sherif, who returned to Bahrain in triumph with the head of Mukarram, which he sent to his sovereign in Hormuz. A bi-lingual inscription was erected in Hormuz to commemorate the victory, and on his return to Hormuz, Antonio Correa was granted the honour by the King of Portugal of bearing on his family arms the title "Barem" in honour of this event.

Soon after the fall of Bahrain the King of Hormuz, restive under Portuguese domination, organized simultaneous revolts against their rule in Muscat, Hormuz, Bahrain and Sohar. In the first two towns the revolts were soon crushed, but more success was met with in Bahrain where Hussein b. Sa'id led the inhabitants in executing the hated Portuguese governor and expelling the garrison, but after a short period of independent rule Hussein came to terms with the Portuguese and accepted their adviser.

The year 1529 saw another challenge to Portuguese authority in Bahrain occasioned by their exiling the vezir of Hormuz, a relative of the governor of Bahrain, for refusing to pay additional taxes. When the Bahrain governor copied the example of his relative, a Portuguese fleet was sent to Bahrain under the command of Simeon da Cunha, brother of the Viceroy of India. Despite the governor's reluctance to come to blows with the Portuguese, they attacked the Bahrain fort, but found themselves short of gunpowder. Fever then reduced the number of able-bodied men to thirty-five. However, the governor aided the fleet to leave Bahrain, for he was afraid he would incur the serious wrath of the Portuguese if he destroyed their expedition, but on the return journey a storm destroyed most of the ships, and Simeon is said to have died from chagrin at his defeat.

By 1534 the Portuguese had again lost control of Bahrain, for in that year the independent rulers of Bahrain and Hasa sent envoys to welcome to Iraq the Turkish Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent. In 1551 one of the three surviving ships of Piri Rais, Kapudan Pasha of Egypt, after the loss of the rest of his fleet by defeat and storms, was wrecked on the treacherous reefs of Bahrain. Local tradition says that the ship was loaded with treasure, plunder from the Pasha's expedition. Three years later the Turkish author-admiral Sidi Ali paid a peaceful visit to Bahrain which he speaks well of, and was entertained by the governor, Rais Murad. However, in 1559 the same governor was attacked in Bahrain by a strong fleet and a brigade of janissaries, but the Turks were severely defeated by a Portuguese fleet which came

to the aid of the beleaguered governor at his request. The last Portuguese governor in Bahrain seems to have been Jalal ed-Din Mahud Murad, in whose reign the Manama fort, built by the Portuguese soon after their arrival in Bahrain, was repaired. 175

The Portuguese attempted to maintain their rule over Bahrain by a carefully conceived policy. They would appoint as their governor a Persian Sunni Moslem, hoping that because he was a Moslem he would be acceptable to the inhabitants, but that being a Persian he would not always side with the Arabs of Bahrain, and being a Sunni that he would not intrigue with the Shia of Bahrain and Persia. Despite this system, however, Portuguese rule in Bahrain was very insecure during the period 1522—1602.

THE FALL OF THE PORTUGUESE

The immediate cause that brought about the expulsion of the Portuguese from Bahrain was the behaviour of their governor, a relative of the king of Hormuz. He set the seal on a most tyrannical rule by the murder, in 1602, of a wealthy and respected Bahraini in order to gain control of his wealth, especially his famous collection of pearls. The victim's brother, Rukn ed-Din, having gained the confidence of the murderer, slew him, and with the aid of the people seized the fort. The rebel then put himself under the protection of the Persians, as being the main rivals of the Portuguese in the Persian Gulf, and the Prince of Shiraz sent a force which withstood a Portuguese counter-attack, and then took over the islands in the name of the Shah of Persia. In 1580 Spain and Portugal had been united under King Philip, and at the time of the fall of Bahrain the Spanish were officially at peace with Persia, but when the Spanish protested about the seizure of Bahrain the Persians retorted that they had taken the islands from the King of Hormuz and not from the Spaniards. Not content with this answer, the governor of Hormuz sent a fleet and an army against Bahrain, but the governor of Shiraz marched on Bushire and drew the Portuguese forces from Bahrain. Despite this, the Portuguese forces would probably have taken the islands but for trouble in their own ranks which prevented the success of the expedition. In 1603, Allah Werdi Khan again seized Bushire and other territories of the ruler of Hormuz, but was ordered by the Shah to retreat from Bushire and to return Bahrain to the Portuguese ; however, the latter order was ignored.

During the next decade the Spanish king in letters to the Viceroy of India emphasized the importance of the recapture of Bahrain, and also made diplomatic representations to the Shah for the return of the islands. Even the capture of Hormuz in 1622 by an Anglo-Persian force did not make the Iberians give up hope of the eventual recovery of Bahrain, and in 1645 a Portuguese fleet set out from India destined for Hormuz and Bahrain, but it was destroyed by Omani pirates before it had even entered the Persian Gulf.

From 1602 till the end of the centruy a series of Persian governors ruled Bahrain with the aid of a garrison of some 300 men, but at the

175 turn of the century the Omanis invaded Bahrain, and the havoc and suffering they caused have been graphically described by a contemporary writer, Samahiji.[5] The invaders were of the Kharijite sect of Islam, enemies of the Shia inhabitants of Bahrain, and their acts drove most of the population of Bahrain to flight to Qatif, where many of them settled. In 1720 the Persians purchased Bahrain from the Omanis for "a large sum of money."

THE PERIOD OF ANARCHY

The confusion in Persia early in the eighteenth century which was caused by the Afghan invasions loosened Persian hold over the Gulf and independent shaikhdoms reappeared. Bahrain fell into the hands of the shaikh of Nabend, and he was later overthrown by the powerful Shaikh of the Huwala Arabs, Jabbara of Tahiri, whose wise and beneficial rule lasted till 1736. In this year Nadir, who had settled the affairs of Persia and made himself Shah, ordered the Persian Admiral Latif Khan to capture Bahrain. The admiral seized two British ships, including the *Northumberland*, for which he paid 50,000 tomans, and sailed with these and other ships for Bahrain. Shaikh Jabbara was away on the pilgrimage to Mecca and his reduced garrison was soon overpowered by the invaders. Bahrain was put under the control of the governor of Shiraz and a Persian garrison was stationed in the Qalat ad-Diwan, the Manama fort built at this time by the Persians and now used as the headquarters of the Bahrain State Police.

In 1738 Bahrain underwent another Omani invasion, when the army of Saif b. Sultan invaded the islands, and again many refugees fled to Qatif and other Persian Gulf ports. It is probable that these two Omani invasions in the eighteenth century were responsible for the many deserted and ruined villages noticed in Bahrain by Niebuhr, who stated that wars had reduced their number from 360 towns and villages to sixty "wretched villages." The occupation, however, was of short duration, for in the following year the Persians annexed Muscat and so regained Bahrain. Later Bahrain was captured by the Huwala Arabs, only to be taken from them by Shaikh Nasir al-Mathkur, shaikh of Bushire and an Arab of Omani origin, one of the many semi-independent shaiks who appeared in the Persian Gulf at this time.

THE AL-KHALIFAH

The present ruling family of Bahrain trace their origin back to the great 'Anizah tribe which once inhabited the deserts of Iraq and later moved down to Najd; the Sa'udis of Sa'udi Arabia and the Sabah of Kuwait are also descended from the same tribe.

In 1716 the Bani Utbah clan, consisting of the three families of the Khalifah, the Sabah and the Jalahma, gave up its nomad habits and settled on the site of the present town of Kuwait. Under the guidance of Shaikh Khalifah b. Muhammad, the clever and enterprising chief of the Khalifahs, the family prospered and became powerful, developing a special interest in the pearl trade. In 1766 Muhammad, successor

5. [From Inst. Res. Ser. cat. #6, p. 87--Analyst]

of Khalifah, led some of the Khalifah families down to the little village of Zubara, on the west coast of Qatar, in order to be nearer the Bahrain pearling industry. The villagers of Zubara welcomed the newcomers and soon the remainder of the Khalifah and many other families came to the new settlement, but the Musallim tribe, the rulers of Qatar, resented the intruders and demanded tribute from them. The Khalifah refused, and with the support of other clans from Kuwait they repulsed an attack of the Musallim. They then continued the construction of a large town between the bay of Zubara and their great fort, Qalat Marir, the ruins of which stand to this day. 175

In 1776 Basra was captured by the Persians, but during its seige many of the inhabitants fled to Zubara, where they were welcomed, and helped to increase the size and importance of that town. The Persians watched with apprehension and envy the expansion of Zubara, which they felt was a threat to their hold over nearby Bahrain, and when Khalifah, Muhammad's son and successor, was away from Zubara on the pilgrimage, they attacked Zubara, but were driven off. Khalifah died before returning from Mecca and was succeeded by Ahmed, who had led the Zubara garrison against the Persians.

Although the first visits of the Khalifah to Bahrain had been carried out on a friendly basis, for the purpose of buying pearls, friction soon developed between them and the local inhabitants, and there was some fighting in which a number of deaths occurred. The governor of Shiraz then despatched a fleet against Zubara under the command of Shaikh Nasir ; the Persians landed on the Qatar coast near the town and were faced by a confederation of Arab clans led by Ahmed al-Khalifah. The two forces joined in combat beneath the high walls of the town, and after hours of bitter fighting in which "the sword play and spear play commenced, heads flew away from bodies and warriors attacked each other with cries which melt away cowardly hearts,"[6] the Khalifah and their allies triumphed and the Persians fled to their ships, leaving many dead on the sands. Meanwhile the Sabah of Kuwait, having heard of the Persian attack on their cousins, descended on Bahrain and cut off the Persian retreat, forcing Shaikh Nasir to retire to Bushire. Soon after the Persian defeat Shaikh Ahmed al-Fatih (The Conqueror) occupied Bahrain and sent Nasir's family, which he found there, to him. It was a result of the Khalifah victory that Rahmah b. Jabr, who had fought alongside the Khalifah at Zubara, broke with that family and became a pirate, reserving his special hate for the new rulers of Bahrain.

THE CONSOLIDATION OF KHALIFAH RULE

Ahmed, the first Khalifah ruler of Bahrain and Zubara, reigned till the year 1796, passing the summers in Bahrain, in the fort built during the time of Nadir Shah, and the winters in the town of Zubara. Ahmed was succeeded by his son Sulman, who was responsible for the emigration of many of the inhabitants of Zubara to Jaw, on the coast of Bahrain, out of fear of the Wahhabis, who were at this time expanding their power in Arabia. In fact, the danger came from another direction;

6. [For footnote see ed. 116, p. 87--Analyst]

175 in 1799 the Imam of Muscat sent a fleet and occupied Bahrain; and Shaikh Sulman believing that he was too weak to expel the invaders, retired to Zubara, from where he made a treaty with Sultan b. Ahmed, and sent him his brother Muhammad as a pledge of his good behaviour. Sulman remained inactive in Zubara till 1807, when the death of his brother left him free to attempt the reconquest of Bahrain. He appealed for help to the Wahhabi ruler, Abd al-'Aziz, who had just captured the Holy Cities and in 1809 the latter sent an army against Bahrain and drove out Salim, its governor, and the garrison which was stationed in the fort that the Omanis had built at Arad, on Muharraq island. The Khalifah expected to be reinstated in Bahrain, but the Wahhabis were loth to give it up having once controlled it, and meanwhile their garrison maltreated the Shia inhabitants and tried to convert them to Wahhabi beliefs. Shaikh Sulman's protests at this treacherous behaviour were ignored, and he was taken with other members of his family to Dar'iyah, the Wahhabi capital, but resistance continued in Bahrain, where the youthful 'Abd ar-Rahman al-Fadhl, a relative of the Khalifah, set our secretly for Muscat, giving out that he was going on a trading expedition to India. He appealed for help to the Imam, who gave him money and a sword, and then proceeded to Persia, where he enlisted the help of the governor of Shiraz ; he also hired men with the money he had received from the Imam. Having met at a rendezvous on the mainland, the Arabo-Persian force was led by 'Abd ar-Rahman against Bahrain and the Wahhabis were expelled, their governor flying to Qatar. Once Bahrain had been retaken, the Khalifahs travelled there from Zubara, as did many other Arabs who disliked the oppressive and harsh rule of the Wahhabis, and despite the measures of its Wahhabi governor, Zubara was left completely deserted. By means of a trick the Khalifah hostages freed themselves from their captors and returned to Bahrain, where Sulman again took up the reins of office.

Concerning Bahrain at this time, we have a description of the islands written by J. M. Kennier in 1813[7]:

"Bahrain island is the finest island in the Gulf. It is covered with villages and date gardens ; there is a town and fort of Medina (*sic*) with 800 or 900 houses. It carries on much trade with Basra and other Gulf ports."

The first contact between the British and the Khalifahs of Bahrain occured in 1814, when the British Resident in Bushire assured the ruling Shaikh of British neutrality if Bahrain were attacked by the Imam of Muscat. In return for this rather negative promise (though the Resident did advise Sayyid Sa'id of Muscat against attacking Bahrain), the Shaikh agreed not to carry out acts hostile to British interests. The attack actually took place in 1816, probably incited by Rahmah b. Jabr, but a dispute between the Muscatis and the force from Bushire resulted in their defeat at Arad and the death of Hamed, brother of the Muscat Sultan. In November 1828, Sa'id again arrived at Bahrain, this time with allies from the Trucial Coast and a battle took place

7 [For footnote see cat. 116, p. 87--Analyst]

at Jufair, but again the disunity of the Muscati army brought about its defeat by the Khalifah. Although in 1829 Sayyid Sa'id officially recognised the independence of Bahrain, to the end of his days he did not cease intriguing with other rulers for the downfall of the Kahlifah. 175

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

In February, 1820, the joint rulers of Bahrain, the shaikhs Sulman and Abdulla, signed the "General Treaty,"[8] the first official contact between the East India Company and Bahrain, which followed a successful British attack on the pirates of Ras al-Khayma. In 1833 Shaikh Abdulla of Bahrain, who was at war with the Wahhabi ruler of Najd, captured a number of ports on the Arabian coast opposite Bahrain, but was prevented from consolidating his position there by dynastic troubles which broke out in Bahrain. These troubles were exploited by the interested powers, Britain, Persia and Egypt, for their own ends, and while Persia and Britain backed different claimants to the throne, Britain warned Egypt and the Sultan of Muscat, whose ruler seemed likely to come to a reapproachment with Mehmet 'Ali over Bahrain, that she would tolerate no Egyptian interference in Bahrain, and Mehmet's aspirations in this area were finally ended by the co-operation of the European powers against him in Syria.

In 1843 Abdulla was expelled from Bahrain by his nephew and co-ruler Muhammad, and retired to Bushire, where he died in 1848, leaving a son who later became very much concerned in the affairs of Bahrain. Muhammad enjoyed a long and comparatively untroubled reign, although in 1855 and 1856 the Wahhabis again put forward claims to Bahrain, but these were rejected by the British, who had already recognized the independence of Bahrain. In 1861 Muhammad signed a "Perpetual Treaty of Peace and Friendship" with Great Britain concerning such matters as slavery, maritime aggression and Britishers trading in Bahrain, but the peace of the islands was disturbed by the raids of Muhammad, son of the Abdulla who had died in exile in Bushire, who, with the aid of the Wahhabis, attacked Bahrain shipping from his base at Dammam. In 1861, the British expelled Muhammad b. Abdulla from Dammam, but he remained in the Persian Gulf and later returned to Bahrain.

After six years of peace war broke out between the Qataris, tributaries of Bahrain, and the Khalifahs. Having invaded Bahrain and been defeated, the Qataris were then involved in a naval battle with the Khalifah between Bahrain and Qatar, and were again defeated, but the British, angered by the actions of Muhammad, declared that he had acted contrary to the Treaty of 1861, and sent a man-of-war to Bahrain. Muhammad b. Khalifah fled to Qatar ; the fort of Abu Mahur, near Muharraq, was destroyed, and the Bahraini fleet was burnt. 'Ali b. Khalifah, who had succeeded his brother on the latter's flight, was forced by the British to pay a fine of 100.000 Maria Theresa dollars, and Muhammad was forbidden to return to Bahrain. The last condition was later released, but Muhammad b. Khalifah continued

8 [To footnote see cat 116, p. 87 --Analyst]

his intrigues, and was re-expelled, fleeing to Kuwait. He later travelled to Darin, where he built up a force with which he invaded Bahrain in September 1869, defeated and killed 'Ali at Rifaa and again became ruler of Bahrain. In Muhammad b. Khalifah's army he had as lieutenant Muhammad b. Abdulla, who had been expelled by the British from Dammam, and later in the year this Muhammad overthrew the new shaikh, imprisoned him, and made himself ruler.

The confusion caused in Bahrain by these troubles resulted in the appearance there of the British consul from Bushire in a man-of-war. The consul arranged for the deportation to Bombay of both the new shaikh and his imprisoned rival, and then consulted with local notables to see which member of the Khalifah family they would prefer to have as shaikh. The choice fell upon 'Isa, son of 'Ali b. Khalifah, who was at the time residing at Qatar, and he was summoned to Bahrain and acclaimed as its ruler. He reigned for fifty-four years till his abdication in 1923.

THE RULE OF SHAIKH 'ISA

From time to time during the remaining years of the nineteenth century the British Government rejected Turkish claims to sovereignty over Bahrain, as in the years 1870 and 1874, while at the same time the British took the opportunity to consolidate their power in Bahrain by means of two treaties signed between Shaikh Isa and the British Government in December, 1880, and March, 1892. By these treaties the shaikh bound himself not to enter into any relationship with a foreign government, other than the British, without the latter's consent, and there were also stipulations about the disposal of Bahrain territories. In 1902 a British Political Agent was posted in Bahrain, and in July, 1913, a Convention was signed by the British and Ottoman Governments, which included the recognition of Bahrain's independence and control of a number of islands near her. Three years later Ibn Sa'ud signed a treaty with the British Government in which he also agreed to refrain from aggression against Bahrain. In April and May of 1923 there were internal troubles in Bahrain which led to the abdication of Shaikh 'Isa and the succession of his son, Shaikh Hamed, who ruled for twelve years as deputy ruler, and on the death of Shaikh 'Isa in 1935 became Shaikh of Bahrain.

BAHRAIN IN RECENT YEARS

With the accession of Shaikh Hamed the story of modern Bahrain begins, and during the nineteen years of his rule Bahrain was transformed into a modern state. Conditions in the pearl industry were reformed, the position of the divers was bettered, municipalities, education and other public services were developed, as is described in other Chapters, and in many ways the state of the people of Bahrain was improved. In 1930 Shaikh Hamed signed a Concession Agreement with a company known as the Bahrain Petroleum Company, and three years later the first tanker-load of oil left Bahrain. The

THE PORTUGUESE IN THE BAHRAIN ISLANDS, 1521-1602

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AT the end of the fifteenth century the Arabs, especially those of Oman and the Yemen, were the principal sea traders of the East. They held a position which was somewhat similar to that previously held by the Venetians in Europe. Their well-equipped fleets were strong enough to protect their trade from the pirates who at that time, and for many centuries before, infested the coasts of the Persian Gulf.

The city of Calicut on the west coast of India, which was ruled by the Zamorin, a Hindu King, was the focus of the Indian Ocean trade, but the great emporium and the meeting-place of Eastern merchants was the famous town of Hormuz, situated on an island on the Iranian coast. To Calicut came huge Chinese junks laden with merchandise from countries beyond India, and from Calicut the Arab fleets carried their cargoes of species and cinnamon and all the produce of the Indies up the Iranian Gulf to Basra and through the Red Sea to Tor and Jedda, where caravans met the ships and conveyed the cargoes across the deserts to the Mediterranean ports.

The Portuguese, whose seamen were then the finest in Europe, possessed the spirit of adventure and the ambition to extend their empire, and for many years they had been interested in the spice trade. Several times they had sent successful missions by the overland route to India to enquire into the source of this lucrative industry. In 1498 Vasco da Gama made his historical voyage to India by rounding the Cape of Good Hope. He led the way for the successful entry of his countrymen into the Iranian Gulf and opened up the road for Europe's maritime invasion of the East. Fleets followed fast, and in a few years the Portuguese had ousted the Arabs from their supremacy at sea and had laid the foundations of their great Eastern empire with its capital at Goa.

When the Portuguese first arrived in the Indian Ocean they anchored off Calicut, where they met with opposition from the Hindu King. They bombarded the city, which finally surrendered to Pedro Cabral, who ordered it to be sacked. A few years later the famous Admiral Alfonso d'Alboquerque took over command in the Gulf and attacked Muscat with a large fleet. Muscat was an important place, a tributary

of Hormuz. The Governor of Muscat refused to submit, so the town was pounded by the Portuguese guns until it surrendered. The Portuguese landed and captured many of the chief inhabitants, whose ears and noses they chopped off; the city was plundered and then wantonly destroyed by fire, and the victorious fleet sailed off along the Oman coast and captured several other ports, which were treated in the same way. After this Alboquerque turned his attention to Hormuz, the key of the Iranian Gulf.

To-day Hormuz is a tiny fishing village on a barren salty island which is visible from ships as they enter the port of Bander Abbas, but when Alboquerque first sailed the waters of the Gulf, Hormuz had the reputation of being a city of fabulous wealth and incomparable luxury and magnificence. The city was originally on the mainland, but when the Tartar hordes swept over Persia it was destroyed and then rebuilt on the island. So famous were the wonders of Hormuz that the sixteenth-century poets in Europe frequently referred to it in their works. To this "jewelled signet of a golden ring" came merchants from all parts of the Orient trading in precious Eastern wares. In the richly stocked markets of Hormuz they sold silks and jewels, ivory and pearls, cloths of silver and of gold, as well as Arab horses and "the finest asses in the world," which may well have been the forbears of the famous Bahrain strain of white donkeys. Even to-day these donkeys have a great reputation and are found as far off as the centre of the Tanganyika Territory in East Africa, where they were taken by Baluchis from Muscat via Zanzibar and Dar es Salaam. The King of Hormuz, who had accumulated great wealth from the Indian trade and the pearl fisheries, possessed large territories both in Iran and on the Arab coast. The islands of Bahrain were subject to Hormuz, which was the distributing centre for the pearls of the Gulf, but Hormuz itself paid tribute to the Sultan of Kerman. The rapid success of the Portuguese navy, both on the Indian coast and in Oman, established for it a reputation of invincibility, and the coming of the foreign conquerors with their strange ships and weapons spread fear and terror along the coasts and the islands of the Gulf.

When Alboquerque and his fleet of tall ships arrived at Hormuz he found that the King was aware of his intention and the Hormuzians were prepared to defend their island. The harbour was filled with ships, the battlements were lined with armed men, and foreign mercenaries had been called in to assist the defenders. Bahrain had sent a fleet with "relief of men and provisions," but the Portuguese met the

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Bahrain ships near Kishm and pursued and scattered them. Albuquerque called on the King to surrender the island to Portugal, and when he refused a fierce sea fight took place in which the Portuguese gained the day, although they were tremendously outnumbered. The King of Hormuz became the vassal of the King of Portugal and was forced to allow the conquerors to build a fortress at one end of the island for their garrison; he agreed to pay an annual tribute, and granted the Portuguese certain concessions in the matter of Customs. These concessions were revised in later years until finally the complete control of Customs passed into the hands of the Portuguese. In 1507 the King of Hormuz refused to pay tribute to Shah Ismail, the ruler of Iran, having transferred his allegiance to Portugal. In the following year, mainly owing to the intrigues among his captains, Alboquerque was obliged to leave Hormuz and returned to India.

During the next few years, while Alboquerque was in India, Iran endeavoured to regain control of Hormuz, but without success. In 1514 Alboquerque sent his nephew Pero to collect the annual tribute from the King of Hormuz and to reoccupy the fortress, and while at Hormuz Pero explored the northern straits of the Gulf as far as Bahrain. This appears to be the first time that the Portuguese visited Bahrain, but no fighting took place and they did not leave a garrison. Owing to a civil war in Hormuz, the demands of the Portuguese were not carried out, and in 1515 Alboquerque returned there himself, and after negotiations with the King of Hormuz, Saif al Din, the island was handed over again to the Portuguese and their garrison was installed in the fortress. About this time the King of Egypt despatched a fleet to the assistance of the Indian princes, who had appealed to him for help against the tyranny of Portugal, and Egypt from this date joined issues against the Portuguese. Alboquerque died at Goa in 1515, leaving his nephew Pero at Hormuz. He was succeeded as Viceroy by Lopo Soarez.

The power of Portugal was approaching its zenith; Hormuz and its tributaries were under its sway and it controlled the import trade and the northern routes to Europe. The naval prestige of the Portuguese was unrivalled, and everywhere their fleets were victorious; their King's representative kept regal state in Goa, from where he ruled over Portugal's Eastern empire, and "only rare and feeble opposition told of deep resentment of their intrusion and brutality." Bahrain, as well as the other dependencies of Hormuz, was subject to Portugal.

Duarte Barbosa, when mentioning the various islands in the Iranian

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175 Gulf which previously belonged to Hormuz, gives the following description of Bahrain:

"Barem, wherein dwell many merchants and other worthy folk, is well placed in the midst of the Persian Gulf, so many ships with much merchandise sail thither. Around it grows much seed pearl, also large pearls of good quality; merchants of the island themselves fish for pearls and have great profit . . . hither come Hormuz merchants to purchase seed pearls, which they sell in India. . . ." Other characteristics which he mentions are the variety of fruits, extraordinarily deep springs of brackish water, dates, wheat and barley, falcons, and horses. Manamah is mentioned as being the name of a town at that time.

The first detailed account of the coming of the Portuguese to Bahrain is the description of its conquest in 1521. When the Portuguese ordered their vassal, the King of Hormuz, to pay the annual tribute, he pleaded as an excuse for not paying his quarrel with Mocrin, the ruler of Hassa, over the ownership of Bahrain and Katif. Diego Lopes Sequiera, the Portuguese Governor, agreed to help the King of Hormuz by sending an expedition against Bahrain to enforce the payment of tribute. Antonio Correa, the Governor's nephew, was given command of the expedition, which consisted of 400 Portuguese soldiers, who filled seven ships, and about 3,000 Arabs, who were carried in 200 vessels. The Armada set sail from Hormuz on June 15, but owing to bad weather the ships were scattered on the way, so that when Antonio Correa reached Bahrain he had with him only 250 Portuguese besides some Hormuzian soldiers, who were commanded by Rais Zarafa.

Mocrin had prepared defences against the enemy and had built earthworks and entrenchments along the shore. He had a force of 300 Arab horsemen, 400 Iranian archers, 20 Turkish musketeers, and about 11,000 Arabs armed with various weapons. His fortifications were furnished with some cannon, and his forces were led by tried commanders, but they had never before been called upon to face an attack by European forces clad in armour and using European weapons.

The Portuguese led the attack. Antonio came first with 170 men, followed by his brother with 50 men, and Rais Zarafa stood in reserve. The Portuguese waded ashore and stormed the trenches, which were hotly defended by the Bahrain troops under the King in person. The heat was terrible, and at noon weariness and the sun compelled both sides to pause. In the evening the attackers advanced again, and Mocrin was shot through the thigh. His followers were so disheartened that they began to give way; many surrendered, and many were killed

and wounded, and finally at the end of the day the Portuguese won a complete victory, and their occupation of Bahrain dates from this time. 175

Rais Zarafa obtained information that the body of King Mocrin, who died a few days after he was wounded, was being taken to Hassa for burial. He intercepted the ship and seized the King's body. The head of Mocrin was cut off and carried back to Hormuz, a bilingual inscription was set up in the city commemorating the bold exploit of Antonio Correa, and the King of Portugal granted him permission to add a King's head to his coat of arms and to assume the title of "Baharem" after his name. The only description available of the taking of Bahrain is from Portuguese sources, and it is likely that the numerical strength of the forces is not accurately described, but in any case the defenders must have far outnumbered the Portuguese and their Hormuzian allies.

In 1522 the King of Hormuz organized a rebellion throughout the Gulf against the Portuguese. On a given night there were simultaneous risings in Hormuz, Bahrain, Muscat, and Sohar. At Hormuz the Portuguese garrison was besieged in the fortress, but eventually relieved by reinforcements from Muscat. In Oman the rebellion was not successful, and, seeing that it had failed, the King of Hormuz fled to Kishm, where he was afterwards murdered. He was succeeded by his son, aged 13, who made a new treaty with the Portuguese in 1523.

The rebels in Bahrain met with better success. According to an Arab history, the people of Bahrain had suffered very severely from the tyranny and oppression of the conquerors. On the appointed night, led by their chief, Shaikh Hussein bin Said, they attacked the Portuguese garrison and completely surprised them. They seized the Portuguese Governor and hung him on a date tree, and they expelled the remnants of the garrison. Shaikh Hussein then proclaimed himself the ruler of Bahrain. After some time, however, he made terms with the Portuguese and was appointed by them as a local governor with a Portuguese official, de Menzies, as his assistant and adviser. Bahrain returned again to the Portuguese rule.

There is a story told in one of the local Shia histories of Bahrain about its occupation by the Portuguese. 173

The islands were ruled, on behalf of Portugal, by a Mohammedan Governor, or Wali, who belonged to the Sunni sect, although the people of Bahrain were Shias. The Wali had a Wazir, who was also a Sunni, and he hated the Shias so bitterly that he never ceased plotting to injure and destroy them by every possible means.

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173 When the mullah heard this advice he was overjoyed and kissed the ground at the feet of the Imam and returned to his people to tell them the good news. On the next morning they all assembled before the Wali, and the mullah did all the things that the Imam had ordered, and everything happened as he had been told, but when the Wali commanded his Wazir to break the pomegranate, smoke and ashes burst forth from it and covered the face and beard of the Wazir.

Then the Wali turned to the mullah and asked him, "Who told you about this trick?"

The mullah answered, "Our Imam and the demonstration of Allah towards us."

Then the Wali rose up from his seat and took the mullah by the hand and called on Allah to bear witness to the trick which had been played on the Shias, and he summoned his servants and his executioner and cut off the head of the Wazir and asked pardon from the people of Bahrain.

175 In 1529 Bahrain was again in rebellion against the Portuguese. The islands were governed by a relation of the King of Hormuz. The King of Hormuz himself had been sent to Portugal, as he became too rich in Hormuz. The Portuguese demanded a higher tribute, and in order to pay this the Hormuzians tried to obtain more money from Bahrain, but the Governor refused to pay.

The Portuguese Viceroy, Nuno da Cunha, appointed Tavarez da Sousa as commander of the seas, and it was intended that he should take command of an expedition against Bahrain. Apparently he was loath to go there, and he persuaded the Viceroy to appoint in his place Simon da Cunha, the Viceroy's brother. After waiting some time for reinforcements from Portugal the fleet sailed from Hormuz. It consisted of five vessels carrying 400 men, and some native craft, but it is said that they had only one and a half casks of gunpowder.

[132] They reached Bahrain in September, the hottest, dampest, and most unhealthy month in the year. They wasted half their small supply of powder in saluting the port. The Bahrain chief hung out two flags on the tower of his fortress, one white and the other red, to show that he was prepared either for peace or for war, but the Portuguese captains were determined to fight. For three days they pounded the walls of the fort with their cannon, and then their supply of gunpowder gave out. In the meantime the Arab leader offered to surrender, on certain conditions, but the Portuguese were determined not to lose the chance of

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looting and refused to accept the surrender. A ship was sent back to Hormuz to bring more powder, but it took not less than fourteen days to go and return, and before this time elapsed the Portuguese were conquered by natural causes.

The soldiers were attacked by fever, and a severe epidemic broke out among them which affected the Hormuzian troops almost as severely as the Portuguese themselves. Their food supplies gave out and they had to depend upon what was given to them by the enemy, who seem to have acted with remarkable benevolence. When only thirty-five of the Portuguese remained fit for duty they decided to withdraw. The sick men were dragged down to the shore by ropes tied to their feet and carried into the boats by the native sailors. The wretched survivors of this ill-fated expedition, weak from illness and so few that they could scarcely man the ships, had great difficulty in reaching Hormuz; many of them perished on the way, including Simon da Cunha, who is said to have died of a broken heart.

Up to this time the Portuguese were still the masters of the Gulf and boasted proudly that its seas were "covered with a wood of ships, the product of the Government's great care"! One of their ambitions was to found a new race from the offspring of their soldiers and seamen, who had intermarried with Indian and Arab women, which would provide them with sailors and local troops. The Portuguese Governors lived richly in splendid residences, and their ships and fighting men were still very superior to those of their opponents. But there were signs that their power was beginning to decline. They depended for ammunitions and reinforcements on Portugal, which was far away; their captains no longer confined themselves to the work of conquest and consolidation, but indulged in private trading; and before the middle of the century they were faced with serious opposition from the Turks, whose strength had gradually been increasing since they first encountered the Portuguese at the beginning of the century.

In 1517 the Turkish Sultan Selim conquered Egypt, made himself Caliph, and annexed the Yemen, so the Turks were able to increase their opposition to the Portuguese by threatening them in the Red Sea. In 1534 Suliman the Magnificent, son of Selim, took Baghdad from the Persians, and from there he began to extend his influence southwards down the Persian Gulf. In the same year the King of Hassa and the ruler of Bahrain, who were, for the time being, independent, sent envoys to submit to the Turkish Viceroy, though actually they paid no allegiance to the Turks. This is the first time that Bahrain came into

175 contact with the Turks, and it is possible that the baseless claim that Turkey advanced at one time to the sovereignty of Bahrain dates from this incident.

Soon after the capture of Baghdad a Turkish fleet commanded by Piri Beg arrived in the Gulf and attacked Muscat. After capturing the city and taking many prisoners, Piri Beg made an unsuccessful attack on Hormuz. The Portuguese fleet pursued him, and he returned to Basra with the enemy at his heels. Among the prisoners on his ship was the Portuguese Governor of Muscat, and, acting on his advice, Piri Beg left Basra with three galleys loaded with loot and plunder. He managed to evade the Portuguese fleet and sailed out of the Gulf, but he lost one of his ships, loaded with treasure, off Bahrain, and finally reached Egypt with the remaining two. History does not relate what happened to the Portuguese officer, but Piri Beg was eventually tried, convicted, and executed, and his vast wealth, most of which was accumulated by acts of piracy, was confiscated by the Sultan.

During the following years the Turks gained many successes in the Gulf. They captured and destroyed Kishm and twice occupied Muscat, but each time they were driven out by the Portuguese. In 1550 Katif, which was a place of importance, was ruled by a vassal of the King of Hormuz, who was subject to the King of Portugal. The people of Katif, assisted by the King of Hassa, rebelled against the Hormuzian rule, expelled the Governor, and appealed to the Turks for help. The Turks welcomed the opportunity of establishing themselves on the mainland of Arabia and sent a force from Basra which occupied the port. Their proximity was a serious danger to Bahrain, and in order to prevent its occupation by the Turks the Portuguese sent a force from Hormuz under Antonio da Naronah, who drove out the Turks, levelled the fortress of Katif to the ground, and re-installed the Hormuzian Governor.

By the middle of the sixteenth century the Turks were vigorously challenging the supremacy of the Portuguese in the Gulf. Sultan Suliman had ambitions which rivalled those of the Portuguese; he aimed at extending his realm throughout the Iranian Gulf, and he hoped to possess the western coast of India. The Portuguese ships were superior to those of the Turks, and their men were better armed, but the Turks enjoyed advantages over their adversaries in other ways. The religious sympathies of the people in the Gulf were with the Turks, and the Portuguese were regarded as infidels. The Turks were nearer to their

base and less affected by climate and disease, and they had not been long enough in the Gulf to acquire the reputation for rapacity and cruelty which characterized the Portuguese.

In 1553 the Sultan appointed Sidi Ali Chalabi as Admiral of the Turkish fleet, with orders to recover the Turkish ships which had been abandoned in Basra after the piratical exploits of Piri Beg. Sidi Ali was a distinguished Turk, a poet, a writer on navigation, and a brave fighter. He wrote a book about his travels and adventures, in which he described his experiences in the Iranian Gulf. He travelled from Aleppo to Basra by land, a journey which took several months, and he took over charge of the ships at Basra from Murad Beg, formerly the Governor of Katif. After repairing and equipping the Turkish galleys, Sidi Ali set sail from Basra and cruised down the Gulf, visiting various ports, including Bushire, Katif and Bahrain. At the last place he stayed a little time. The islands were governed on behalf of the Portuguese by a local ruler, Rais Murad, who received Sidi Ali with friendliness and showed him, among other things, the strange springs of fresh water coming up from the bed of the sea. When Sidi Ali made enquiries about the Portuguese he received evasive answers.

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On leaving Bahrain he met a strong Portuguese fleet in the neighbourhood of Muscat; there were twelve large ships of war and twenty-two smaller ones. Their mizzen sails were set and their gilded beak-heads, towering forecastles, and masts gay with bunting obscured the horizon. Undaunted by their superior numbers, the gallant Turkish Admiral attacked the enemy. The ships bombarded each other with cannon; then they came closer, and the fighting men hurled down javelins and arrows from the high turrets while the sweating slaves tugged at the oars. Finally, they grappled and fell upon each other, fighting fiercely with swords and spears. Five Turkish galleys were destroyed, and there was great loss on both sides; many of the refugees landed on the shore, where they were hospitably treated by the natives, but eventually the remainder of the Turkish fleet made its way down the Gulf.

Shortly afterwards the Turks made a determined effort to capture Bahrain. In 1559 a powerful force of 1,200 Turks and Janissaries, in two galleys and seventy barques, was sent against the islands. Rais Murad was still the Governor, and the Portuguese sent a fleet from Hormuz to his assistance. On the way it met some Turkish ships and drove them on to the shore. The Turks had landed and besieged the fortress, and when the Portuguese arrived they had a council of war and decided to

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175 surround the besiegers. However, the Portuguese officers became impatient and forced an engagement. Rais Murad broke through the Turkish line with 300 well-armed men and joined the Portuguese, and together they routed the Turks. The Portuguese pursued the Turks, counting the victory already won, but the Turks rallied and fell on the Portuguese in an ambush, killing many of them, including their leader, Don Alvara da Silvera, whose body was never recovered from the enemy. A great number of the Portuguese were slain, and Rais Murad retired again to his fortress.

Pero Peixoto took command of the Portuguese, and while the guns of his ships cut off their retreat to the sea he launched another attack on the Turks, who finally surrendered. They were allowed to leave Bahrain on condition that they handed over their arms, prisoners and animals and ammunition, and ten thousand ducats. After this ignominious defeat the Turks retired to Basra, and the Portuguese re-established their authority over Bahrain.

During the second half of the sixteenth century there is very little recorded about Bahrain. A local Arab author states that the Portuguese repaired the fort in 1586 and that this date is inscribed on some stones in three of the four towers, but no such inscription exists now, although someone during recent years wrote this date in black paint on various places on the walls.

After 1580 the power of the Portuguese in the East began definitely to wane, mainly owing to the domination in Europe of Spain over Portugal, which lasted for sixty years. It was a disastrous period for the Portuguese; in India and the Persian Gulf they were threatened by the Turks, the Dutch, the French, and the English, who snatched from them most of their great Eastern empire. They were no longer able to sustain their garrisons, and, as the number and quality of the reinforcements dwindled, the Arabs and the Persians became more bold in opposing the tyranny of the infidel conquerors. The prestige of the Portuguese navy decreased; the captains of the fleets, who when they first arrived were almost invincible, began to "shirk encounters"; instead of confining their attention to fighting, they paid too much attention to enriching themselves by trade.

In 1602 the Portuguese were expelled from Bahrain by Iran, and an account of the incident is given at some length by a contemporary writer. The Governor of Bahrain, a relation of the King of Hormuz, treated the people of the islands with excessive harshness and oppression. His tyranny culminated in the murder of a wealthy and much-respected

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Bahrain pearl merchant, whose possessions, which included many valuable pearls, were seized by the Governor. The murder caused great indignation, but the people were too afraid to retaliate. The murdered merchant had a brother who was very devoted to him and who determined to avenge the murder. Concealing his feelings, he attached himself to the Governor and eventually managed to win his confidence so thoroughly that one day he got an opportunity and stabbed him to death with a dagger. Having done this, he proclaimed himself ruler and was joined by most of the local population. They overpowered the small Portuguese garrison and seized the fortress, and the Prince of Shiraz sent a force to assist the rebels and to take control of the islands in the name of the Shah of Iran.

Portugal and Iran at this time were outwardly on friendly terms, and a Portuguese mission was visiting Iran and endeavouring to persuade the Shah to join the Portuguese in fighting the Turks. If the mission achieved its object, the Portuguese would be free to deal with the Dutch, whose ships were "infesting the oceans." The King of Portugal remonstrated with the Shah of Iran at his unfriendly action in assisting the rebellion in Bahrain, but the latter made the flimsy excuse that he had not taken Bahrain from the Portuguese, but from a vassal of the King of Hormuz.

In spite of their difficulties, the Portuguese prepared to recover Bahrain, and the Governor of Hormuz, Don Pedro Contigno, appointed one of his officers, Captain Francisco da Soto Major, as the commander of a mixed force of Portuguese and Hormuzians, whose object was to prevent the Persians sending more troops to Bahrain and recapture the islands. Although they were joined by some troops and ships of war from India under Don George of Castel Bruno, the expedition was a weak one and the ships were undermanned.

The Governor of Hormuz "arranged all things well, with diligence and prudence, and without doubt he would have recovered Bahrain as he hoped, having acquired great reputation in all sea affairs," but unfortunately for him he had enemies at the court of the Viceroy at Goa who were intriguing against him. At this critical moment their intrigues bore fruit. He was suddenly dismissed from his command, which was not an unusual event, without even being given an opportunity to defend himself.

Diezo Barrato, his successor, was a sick man, and on assuming command he found that the forces were severely depleted by disease and the need of taking away men to fight the Dutch. His second in com-

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175 mand, Gasper da Mello, made strenuous efforts to fit out the expedition, but with small success.

The ruler of Iran, the famous Shah Abbas, on hearing that the Portuguese were preparing to recover Bahrain, despatched a formidable army of five or six thousand men, under Adam Sultan, to threaten the Portuguese garrison in Gombrun (Bander Abbas) to divert the Portuguese from Bahrain, and the Portuguese mission in Iran sent one of its members post-haste to Hormuz to persuade his countrymen not to jeopardize the success of the negotiations by provoking a breach with Iran over the occupation of Bahrain. It is stated in a Portuguese history that Shah Abbas ordered that Bahrain should be restored to the Portuguese, but if this order was given it was not carried out. The Portuguese garrison in Gombrun mutinied and surrendered the town to the Persians, and eventually, partly for political reasons and partly because they were so hard-pressed, the Portuguese abandoned their project of an attack on Bahrain "for the pretensions of an island which we could easily conquer later on." But this was a vain boast; Bahrain was never again taken by Portugal, although for many years the King of Portugal continued to protest at the occupation of Bahrain by the Iranians, and on one occasion, in 1605, he ordered his Viceroy to make war on Bahrain by sea and by land and suggested that the Captain of the fort might be bribed to surrender. It was not until 1622, when the Portuguese lost Hormuz to an allied Iranian and English force, that they finally gave up all hope of recovering Bahrain.

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INTRODUCTION

101 131 About midway of the Persian Gulf and some fifteen miles off the coast of Arabia, lie the Bahrein Islands at the mouth of the Gulf of Bahrein, of which the Qatar Peninsula forms the western side. There are five principal islands, only two of which are of real consequence. The largest and by far the most important is variously called Awal, Al Manāmah after the principal city, or more commonly just Bahrein. The last is the modern designation.

103 In ancient times, the name "Bahrein" was applied to a larger area which included the Arabian mainland of Qatar and Hajar and the land situated between Mesopotamia and the Gulf of Oman (the Indian Ocean); this area took in the entire southern coast of the Persian Gulf. This has caused widespread misinterpretation of much of the writings of pre-Islamic and Medieval historians. Throughout this book we shall use the term "Bahrein" in its modern sense to refer to the archipelago of Bahrein proper or to the central island, except where the mainland province is clearly indicated.

132 511 Bahrein today has few attractions. There is not much to recommend it as a place of residence, as it is intensely hot for about seven months of the year, and for many of the native inhabitants lacking in comfortable living conditions. For tourists it is rather off the beaten track. Nevertheless, through the centuries these bits of land have been considered well worth fighting for by both European and Asiatic empires.

228 648 312 The reason for Bahrein's unusual and enduring importance can be summed up in two words—pearls and strategy. The pearl fisheries of Bahrein have been known all over the world since the dawn of history and, thanks to an abundance of fresh water springs, the island was a frequent stopping place for ships on the trade routes to India and the Far East.

648 175 The Portuguese, the first European power to have an Asiatic colonial empire, fought hard for possession of the islands.

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They held them for some time, but finally lost them to the Persians, who with the help of the British, put an end to Portuguese domination of the Persian Gulf.

One generation passeth away and another generation cometh; but the earth abideth forever. Hardly had the Persians rid the Gulf of the Portuguese than they had to face British naval supremacy. At first the British did not seem to realize the importance of Bahrein and did not intervene actively until the beginning of the nineteenth century. Since then, however, they have made up for lost time and Bahrein has become, to borrow Byron's picturesque expression, "a bundle of hay" with Persia trying to hold it and John Bull tugging "a different way." This diplomatic tug of war has continued ever since, and very recently the Persian government was directed by the Parliament to "take effective measures with a view toward implementing the Persian sovereignty over the islands."

In olden times Bahrein was a center of religious studies and produced great religious philosophers and mystics, as well as students of mathematics and the Arabic languages; but the general public was content with the Koran texts and Moslem catechism. The majority of the schools were part of the mosques and other religious foundations and were under their supervision. The beginning of the modern schools in Bahrein dates from the first World War. Among them were Persian schools supported by Persian merchants for the education of Persian children, but open also to the children of other communities. However, the Anglo-Persian controversy of 1930 over Bahrein resulted in the decision of the local government, encouraged by the British Ambassador, to create its own system of education independent of Persian influence. In the schools, as in other things, Bahrein followed the general pattern of Arabization of the Persian Gulf, and to this end adopted the Iraqi system of education.

The discovery of oil in 1930, and the granting of concessions to American interests, has singularly enhanced the historic importance of Bahrein and created a complicated international

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problem. The protestations of the Persian Government and its view of the concession as null and void, have broadened the Anglo-Persian controversy to include the United States, and as a side issue have created an Irano-American dispute. Considering the location and the nature of the countries involved, this has dangerous potentialities, especially in the present state of international relations.

With the above in mind, the present book was written to provide the reader with the minimum of facts essential to an understanding of the problems in this part of the world.

The author wishes to express his gratitude to Ali Aghassi for his scholarly suggestions and sincere and friendly encouragements, without which this work would have been impossible.

A. FAROUGHY.

New York, August 1950.

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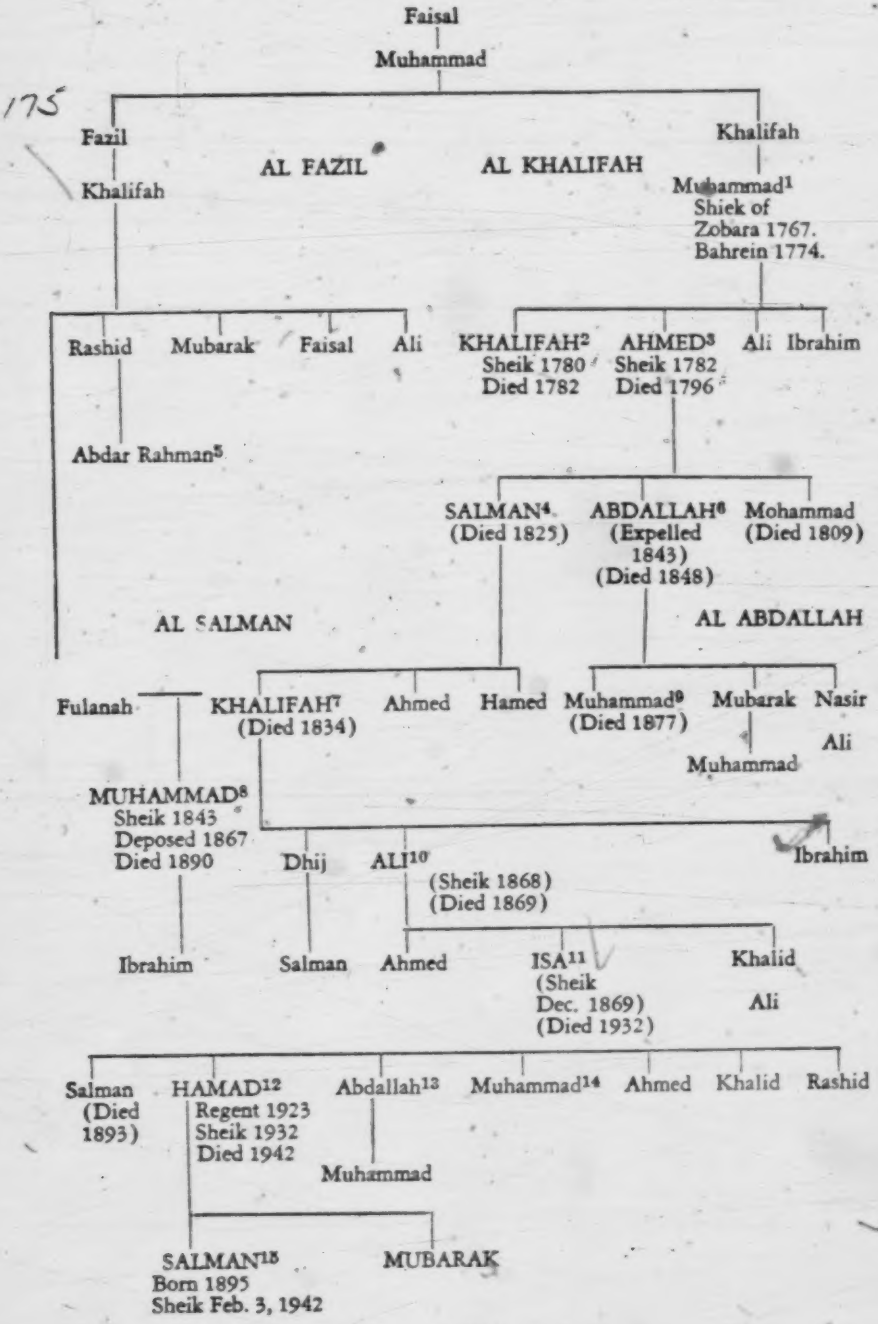
GENEALOGY OF THE SHEIKS OF BAHREIN



LEGEND

1. Moved from Koweit to Zobara and became Sheik about 1767. Ruled Bahrein for the Governor of Bushir, 1774. Died at Makka 1782. 175
2. Sheik of Zobara, 1789.
3. Sheik, 1782. He is called the "Conqueror."
4. Ruled jointly with his brother Abdallah.
5. Chased the Wahhabi from Bahrein with the help of Persian recruits, the expedition being financed by the Iman of Mascat (1810).
6. Ruled jointly with his brother Salman, then with his nephew Khalifah and his son Muhammad. He chased the latter from Bahrein in 1842 and ruled alone for 9 months. Expelled from Bahrein by Muhammad in 1843, he died at Mascat in 1846.
7. Ruled jointly with his uncle Abdallah.
8. His mother was the sister of Mubarak ibn Khalifah. Chased from Bahrein in 1842, reestablished himself Sheik in 1843. Deposed by the British in 1867, he returned to Bahrein after the defeat of his brother in 1869, where he ruled for three months. After the British intervention he was exiled first to Bombay, then to Makka where he died in 1890.
9. He continued his father's war against Bahrein. In 1859 he was declared a public enemy and expelled from Damman by a British force. In 1869 he declared himself for Muhammad ibn Khalifah, then put him in jail and declared himself Sheik. Deported by the British shortly afterwards, he died at Chunar in 1877.
10. Became Sheik after the flight of his brother from Bahrein. Treated with the English who recognized him as Sheik. He was defeated and killed in the war with Muhammad in 1869.
11. He was declared Sheik by the British at the age of 21 in 1869. His mother was the daughter of Isa ibn Tarif, Sheik of Kish and of the Al Ibn Ali tribe. Isa was "persuaded" in 1923 to relegate his power to his son Hamad.
12. First as his father's Lieutenant 1923, then as Sheik after the death of his father in 1932. He died of a heart attack in 1942.
13. On February 1, 1915, he was decorated by the Viceroy of India at Koweit and received the Cross of the Order of the Indian Empire.
14. Visited the United States in 1939 and was the guest of President Roosev[illegible] at Hyde Park.
15. Present Sheik was born in 1895. He became Sheik on February 3, [illegible]

[pp. 50 and 51 contain no textual material]

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ANCIENT HISTORY

175 According to Arab tradition the inhabitants of Bahrein belong to the tribe of Thamud, who, driven out of Yemen at the beginning of the second millenium B.C., crossed the desert and settled in the islands.

Recent archaeological discoveries, however, show that in the second or third millenium Bahrein was already inhabited by a people of tall stature with mesocephalic heads. In Babylonian inscriptions we find the island of Tilmun, or Dilmun, mentioned, along with the corresponding Sumerian term *Nituk-Ki* ("The Place of Taking Oil"). Records show that Sumerian ships visited the island from earliest times, buying dates, bronze, spices, wood, etc., and place the island in the middle of the Lower Sea, or Persian Gulf. That the island of Tilmun, or Dilmun, is probably identical with the island of Bahrein has been demonstrated by a number of orientalists.

We know that Tilmun was the capital of an important empire ruled by a king called Uperi, who had extended his authority throughout the Arabian coast of the Persian Gulf. The annals of Sargon II (722-705 B.C.) tell us that Uperi, King of Dilmun, "who has his abode in the midst of the sea like a fish . . . brought his gifts"—meaning that he recognized himself vassal of the Assyrian King. This submission does not seem to have lasted long, for Bahrein soon became independent, or perhaps recognized the authority of Babylonia—the records are not clear. The terrible destruction of Babylon in 689 B.C., "the dust of which reached Tilmun" (being sent by Sennacherib as a "reminder") filled the islanders with such terror that they hurried to send tribute and submit themselves again to the Assyrians. Since that time Bahrein has followed the political destiny of Mesopotamia and Iran. In 538 Babylon fell into the hands of Cyrus the Great, and Persia became the paramount power in this part of the ancient world.

With the rise of the Persian Empire and the extension of its maritime commerce, Bahrein, because of her strategic position, became a Persian naval base. The far-ranging Persian vessels,

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making for the ports of India and the Red Sea, used to take on fresh water from the springs of the island. With the fall of her empire, however, Persia's maritime power disappeared and the inhabitants of the Gulf were left to themselves.

The wealth of the Gulf Regions, acquired through a flourishing commerce, attracted the Arab tribes of Yemen, who were searching for *Lebensraum* to the north. The great Persian historian, Tabari, places the earliest arrival of these tribes in Iraq near the time of the last Parthian Kings of Persia, that is, toward the beginning of the third century A.D. They came from the regions around the Red Sea—from Hejaz and Yamama,[1] the capital and most important city of which was Hajar—and from the province of Bahrein at the border of Iraq.

The Arabs were stopped temporarily in their northward march by the Parthians. However, the might of the Persian kings began to decline following their incessant wars with Rome and a period of internal trouble, and the Arabs once more moved northward and established themselves in Iraq, where they founded the little kingdom of Hira.

Al Isfahani, the chief authority on Arab folklore, tells the story in the following way:

> The emigrants from Yemen, with Malik, his brother Amr and their nephew Zuhair at their head, invaded Bahrein, which they took from the Nabataeans, who then ruled it.
>
> Before the invasion, however, they consulted the famous sibyl Kahina (or Zirka), the sister of Malik. The woman prophesied: "This place will be for you a *tannukh* (station) until there comes a raven with rings on its feet. It will sit on a palm tree and fly off croaking. Follow it." The people therefore took the name of *Tannukhites*. Little by little, other emigrants joined them. After they had sojourned several years in Bahrein there appeared a raven with rings on its feet which sat on a palm tree, then flew off croaking *Hira, Hira*. The Tannukhites, remembering the prophetess, set out after the bird, which led them toward Iraq. On the way to the conquest of new lands Malik founded the city of Hira, which later became the seat of an important Arab principality, tributary to the Persian Empire.

1. According to the Arab geographer, Yakut, this province was formerly called Jawa. During the Middle Ages a town of that name existed on the mainland and the little village of Jau on Bahrein Island still bears the name.

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175 From Tabari we learn that at the time of the founding of the Sassanian dynasty (early third century) the King of Bahrein, called Satirun, had entrenched himself in a fortress. Following his conquest of the countries around Fars (the province of Persia proper), Ardashir sent an army into Bahrein and after a year's siege took the fortress, seized its treasure, and returned with it to Persia. The Crown Prince, the future Shapur I, was given the regency over the reconquered territories. Following this conquest, the Persians founded the city of Batn Ardashir (Bīt Ardashir) on the coast of Khatt opposite the island of Bahrein, and constructed canals for the city.

In the early part of the fourth century, during the minority of Shapur II (309-325), Arab tribes from Bahrein, which at this time comprised Hasa and Qatif, and Yamama, raided Persian territories and sacked the Port of Rām Ardashir (Rishahr), near the present-day Bushir. The Persian army, under the command of Shapur, attacked and massacred the Arabs in large numbers. Some of the survivors took refuge in Mesopotamia, while those from Bahrein retired to their own country. Wishing to get hold of the Bahreins, Shapur embarked with his army, landed at Qatif and put them to the sword in great numbers. He seized Hajar, exterminated the greater part of the tribe of Abd al Kais, wreaked a terrible vengeance on the Banū Khatham, and fell upon the Tamim. He ordered his men to pierce the shoulders of the captives, tie them together with ropes, and bring them to him. This treatment earned for Shapur the nickname in Arabic of Dhu'l Aktāf, or Lord of the Shoulders.[1] Bahrein again became a dependency of Fars and later was annexed to the dominion of the Kings of Hira who ruled these regions as vassals of the Persian emperors. Once again, the island of Bahrein followed the fate of the Arab mainland, and it is interesting to note that the famous Arab poet, Tarfa, who came originally from Awal (the ancient name of Bahrein Island), was put to death about 560 by the Governor of the island on orders from the King of Hira.

1. According to Hamzah of Isfahan, the Persians gave him the title of Hūya Sunbā from huyā (*shoulders*) and sūnba (perforated).

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Soon thereafter, the failure of the collectivist experiment (Mazdakism) in Persia created a strong tendency to a more centralized form of administration, and the Persians took a direct hand in the affairs of the Gulf. They reorganized their fleet, garrisoned several places along the coast of Arabia, including a number of the cities of Oman, Yemen, and Ethiopia, and reoccupied the positions they had formerly lost or abandoned. Under the guidane of Cosroes the Just, who was a great lover of the sea,[1] the Persians undertook successfully the exploration and discovery of the African coast and the island of Madagascar. The province of Bahrein, with its capital at Hajar, became the newly created Satrapy of Mazun and was governed by an Ispahbad (Marshal) of the Empire. Bahrein Island, the capital of which was then at Shirin, or Darin, became an important naval base and a port of call for the Persian ships which (probably making use of the compass), were trading with Ceylon and the Orient, or the eastern coasts of Africa.

This situation lasted until the rise of Islam in 622 A. D.

ISLAM

The year 8 of the Hijra (630 A. D.) is recorded in the annals of Islam as the Year of Deputation, for it was at this time that Mohammad sent representatives to various sovereigns of the ancient world to invite them to become Moslems. Among those who answered the Prophet's appeal was Jarud, the chief of the powerful Christian tribe of 'Abdal Kais, who visited Medina, accepted Islam, and was sent to Bahrein to carry the Prophet's message.

At this time, the civil administration of Bahrein was in the hands of local chiefs and princes who paid tribute, and the Persian viceroy had charge of military affairs only. Jarud, accompanied by Ala, the envoy of the Prophet, succeeded in converting to the Moslem faith the Satrap of the province, and

1. Procopius tells us that in the year 540 A.D., when the King reached Saleucia on the Mediterranean coast, "he bathed himself alone in the sea water."

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175 a number of Persians, as well as several tribal chiefs, notably the Prince of Hajar. However, much of that prosperous community, composed mostly of Jews, Christians, and Hindus, refused to be converted and agreed instead to pay tribute, which was fixed at one dinar per capita.

The newly made Moslems submitted to the payment of the *dime* and undertook their new religious duties. These, however, were apparently difficult to conform to and perhaps were stricter than the people had anticipated, for less than two years later, upon learning of the death of the Prophet, most of the Arabs who had adopted Islam renounced it and apostasized. In order to cut all political ties with Medina, they elected as their king a descendant of the Kings of Hira, whose surname was *Al-Ghurur* ("Conceited").[1]

The majority of inhabitants, the Zutts, Hindu halfbreeds with Negro and aboriginal mestizo mixture, joined the insurgents and seized Hajar, the capital. The position of the tribes which had remained faithful was becoming untenable. Then Alā, at the head of troops sent by the Caliph, invaded the province and, after a bitter struggle, succeeded in putting down the rebellion and pacifying the country. The young king, who actually had played a puppet role, was taken prisoner. He saved his life by adopting Islam, but lost his throne and also his nickname, for he was known thereafter as *Al-Maghrur* ("the Dupe").

Except for having to pay tribute, Bahrein seems to have suffered little in the war. The tribute which was levied is said to have been the enormous sum of 500,00 dirhams. To enable the Caliph to comprehend the size of this amount, we are told that it was described to him as "one hundred thousand, five times." The possession of Bahrein was of the greatest value to the Arabs, and the armies of the Caliph used the island as a springboard in their invasion of the southern provinces of Persia.

Following the assassination of the third Caliph and the coming to power of the Omayyads, a large party of rebel Khawārij found refuge in Oman and Bahrein, preparing the

1. The arabic root *Gharr* also means "to deceive."

way for the Karmats. Under the Omayyads, Bahrein was separated from the province of Iraq and was governed from Basra. In spite of their very severe administration, the Omayyads seem to have had many partisans in the province who stood by them at the change of dynasties.

In 750 Abul Abbas ("The Shedder of Blood"), founder of the dynasty of the Abbasides, entrusted the government of Basra, together with its dependencies of Bahrein and Oman, to his uncle, Suleiman, to whom he gave the task of driving out the refugee Omayyads. Bahrein was reconquered and again paid tribute. In the year 160 of Hijra (782 A. D.), the government of Fars, Ahwaz, Bahrein and Oman was given to Muhammad, son of Suleiman. Seven years later these same regions were under the governorship of the famous Yahya, the Persian, vizier of the Caliph Mahdi and the tutor of Harun ar-Rashid. The government was held by the family of Yahya until their disgrace in 798, when the Caliph decided upon a stronger personal rule and the hegemony of the purely Arab element. However, the authority of the Caliphs of Bagdad was never consolidated, and Arab chauvinism hastened the disintegration of the Empire. By the end of the ninth century they had lost even their control over the Arabian Peninsula, and Bahrein became the dominion of the representatives of the Shiite sect, the Karmats, whose rise to power began at this time.

In 899 the Karmats seized Hasa, bordering the Persian Gulf, and a short time later, Hajar, which they renamed al Mu'minya ("The City of the Faithful"). They initiated customs at Bahrein and forced all vessels that traded in the Gulf to go there to pay the *dime*.

In 930 the Karmatian chief, Abu Tahir, in an audacious raid pillaged and profaned the holy city of Mecca and took with him to Bahrein the famous Black Stone, which according to tradition was brought to Abraham by the angel Gabriel. The stone remained in Bahrein for twenty-two years until in 951, in return for a large ransom, it was restored to its rightful place at Mecca.

To enforce their customs regulations, the Karmats raided

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175 and destroyed a number of the cities of the Persian littoral. These expeditions provoked a war with the Bowid dynasty of Persia, whose army was able to occupy Oman and a great part of the southern coast of the Persian Gulf and drive the Karmats out. But the latter, though terribly weakened, succeeded, despite Persian efforts, in maintaining themselves at Hasa. When the Moslem traveler, Nasir Khosrow, visited the Gulf in 1050, Hasa and the island of Bahrein belonged to six Karmatian chiefs, who ruled it jointly with their six advisory ministers. The capital of Bahrein was even then an important city. Date plantations flourished and pearls were fished, half of the pearls found going to the chiefs.

Serious trouble resulting in the fall of the Karmats began on the island of Bahrein shortly after the visit of Nasir Khosrow. The Bahreinis refused to pay additional taxes demanded by the Karmats, and revolted. Their leader, Abul Bahlul, defeated the Karmat forces and declared himself Emir of the country. He did not long enjoy the fruits of his victory, however, for in 1076 the island became a tributary of Yahya, a chief of Qatif on the mainland of Arabia.

It was at this time that the expeditions of the Seljoucids took place, resulting in the complete annihilation of the Karmats. The disappearance of Karmat power left the chiefs of the little tribe of the Uyunis[1] as masters of Hasa. Abdallah, the founder of this dynasty, conquered Bahrein in 1081 and his heirs assumed the powers of the family of Yahya.

These new conquerors, like their forerunners, did not long remain in power, for they were forced to recognize the sovereignty of the rulers of Kish, who policed the Gulf in the name of the Caliph.

The little island of Kish (or Qais) had belonged since the twelfth century to a local dynasty of merchant origin, the Beni Kaisar, who had extended their influence over the coast of the Persian Gulf, and whose fleet controlled the trade with

103 1. The Uyunis took their name from the district of Uyun, in the north of Hasa. *Uyun*, which means "the springs," is so called because of the large number of springs (nearly four hundred) that water its date plantations and fields.

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India. The Beni Kaisar paid half their income to the Caliph of Bagdad, who maintained a fiscal agent at Kish.

Idrisi, who wrote in the first half of the twelfth century, tells us that although Bahrein was governed by an independent chief, the Governor of Kish was "entitled" to collect taxes on the pearl fishing in the island. He speaks of the capital city as well populated, with fertile outlying regions producing abundant grain and dates. There was also a flourishing trade in guano, which was both exported to Mesopotamia and used as a fertilizer for the palm groves.

By now, the Persian Gulf, which was the natural passage for the transport of goods from India and the Far East, had become the principal artery of traffic between the merchant cities of Europe and Asia.

If the size of the Jewish population of a city is an indication of its commercial importance—as it invariably was in the Middle Ages—then the ports of the Persian Gulf must have been extremely prosperous. The Jewish merchant, Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela, Spain, who visited the Gulf about 1171, estimated the Jewish population of the city of Qatif alone at 5,000. The majority of the Jews were traders, and the greater part of their commerce was in pearls, fished in and near the island of Bahrein. Sixty years later Ibn Mujavir speaks of Bahrein as an important commercial center. At that time the island included more than three hundred sixty villages, inhabited by "fanatical Shiites."

It was about this time that the dynasty of Kish fell. Briefly, the events attending its fall were these:

The tribute of Kish was sent to the treasury of Fars and the authority of the sovereign of Kish came from the Sulgharids who ruled that Persian province. With the ascendance to the throne of Abu Bakr Kutluk in 1226, the sovereign of Kish refused to pay tribute, or to renew his submission to the throne. Abu Bakr, having no fleet, allied himself with the King of Hormuz, another little merchant kingdom of the Gulf and a commercial rival of Kish, in the hope of reducing the rebellious kingdom.

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175 In return for his aid, the King of Hormuz was promised sovereignty over Kish and its dependencies, notably Bahrein, on condition that he pay to Abu Bakr two-thirds of the revenues of those territories. Hormuz agreed, and placed its fleet at the disposal of Abu Bakr.

In the naval engagement which took place, Malik Sultan, the ruler of Kish, was killed (May 9, 1229) and the island fell into the hands of the King of Hormuz. Thus the latter was able to avenge the terrible fate that had befallen Hormuz when Malik Dinār, with the help of the rulers of Kish, had pillaged the coast of the Gulf in the year 1190.

Once in possession of the island, the King of Hormuz refused to carry out his agreement to pay two-thirds of his revenues to Abu Bakr. The latter was able to use the fleet of Kish which had just returned from India, and recaptured the island in 1236. The same year Bahrein Island was taken and annexed to the Province of Fars. Seven years later he extended his rule to the peninsula of Qatif and annexed the neighboring regions to his dominion. The local sheiks recognized themselves vassals of Abu Bakr and promised to live in peace with one another. In return they received an annual subsidy of 12,000 gold Dinārs paid to them by the treasury of Fars. After these victories, Atabak added to his already pompous titles of "Heir to the Kingdom of Salomon, the Justice of the World, the Glory of the Faith and the Earth," the words, "Sultan of the Land and the Sea."

After the death of Abu Bakr (1261), his kingdom fell prey to disorders, and the Mongol Emperors of Persia decided to participate more directly in the administration of the province of Fars, and the province soon lost its special political status. Beginning in 1290, the Mongols "farmed out" the government of Kish and its dependencies to the brothers Tībi, in return for a fixed annual revenue of 70,00 gold dinārs and 200 *man*[1] of the pearls fished on the island. The prosperity of the commerce of the Gulf at this time was so great, that in the six year period

1. A man weighs between five and six pounds (avoirdupois).

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from 1291 to 1297, revenues from the region are said to have been more than ten million gold dināṛs and 1,500 man of pearls.

This state of affairs lasted until 1320, when Izzed-Din Tībi was executed by order of the Mongol Emperor, Abu Sa'id, and the power of the family curtailed. For fifteen years Bahrein and the other ports of the Persian Gulf were farmed out or paid direct tribute to the Treasury of Fars. On the night of December 1, 1335, the Emperor Abu Sa'id was poisoned by his vengeful Queen—he had paid too much attention to her rival—and the assassination was the signal for a general disintegration of the Mongol Empire. The King of Hormuz, Qutb ed-Din Tahmtan, invaded and annexed Kish, Bahrein, and its dependencies of Qatif and Kalhat on the coast of Oman. For the next 260 years Bahrein was ruled almost without interruption by the Kings of Hormuz (themselves tributary of the Persian Empire), and followed the fate of Hormuz even after its invasion by the Portuguese in 1515.

THE PORTUGUESE

The entrance of the Portuguese on the scene changed the status of the Gulf and complicated the political situation of Bahrein. The Kings of Hormuz, though they still paid allegiance to the Persian Empire, became in fact Portuguese vassals. This curious situation was the result of the Shah Ismail's negotiations with Albuquerque, in view of contracting a military alliance against the Turks. Persia, engaged in a mortal war with the Ottomans, was unwilling to create new conflicts on her southern borders. Furthermore, the Court of Tabriz was hoping that the Portuguese fleet in the Mediterranean would engage the Turks to relieve their threat on Persian provinces. Indeed, it was not the right time to antagonize the Portuguese. However, despite their promises, the Portuguese did nothing to help the Persians, and finding the Persians busy, they installed themselves at Hormuz. Their domination of the Gulf continued for more than a century.

The acquisition of Hormuz was justly valued by the Portu-

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guese, who had a saying that if the world were a ring, Hormuz would be the stone. The pearl trade of Bahrein which, through Hormuz, was carried on principally with Europe and with Surat, in India, was valued at this time at more than £3,000,000 yearly. A sixteenth century Portuguese writer tells us that the isand of Hormuz paid to Persia an annual tribute of 80,000 "patacas" (piasters).[1]

The conquest of Bahrein, however, was not undertaken immediately and it was only in 1521 that a Portuguese expedition, under Antonio Correa, landed for the first time on the island.

The Governor of Bahrein in person commanded his troops, which included a detachment of four hundred Persian archers and several musketeers. In the engagement which took place, the Governor was wounded and a few days later died. Correa intercepted the Bahreini vessel which was transporting the body of the slain chief to the mainland and, recovering the corpse, cut off the head and carried it back to Hormuz. This exploit caused the King of Portugal to issue an edict authorizing Correa to add a king's head to his coat of arms and to assume the title of Bahrein after his name.

Portuguese historians boast of the conquest of Bahrein, but in reality it was a "commando" operation, having as its principal aim the destruction of the Bahreini fleet. Even in this, the Portuguese were not wholly successful and the Bahrein fleet escaped destruction.

The Bahreinis were soon to revenge themselves by the massacre of the Portuguese garrison to the last man and by hanging the commander from a palm tree. They continued in their relationship with Hormuz and paid tribute to that kingdom, which, of course, was under the authority of the Portuguese. When in 1529 the Portuguese deported Rais Sharaf, the vizier of Hormuz, to Portugal, the Bahreinis revolted and refused to pay the annual tribute, and the Portuguese failed to establish themselves in the islands.

1. This is equivalent to sixty million rials.

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The position of Portugal in Hormuz, and especially in Bahrein, was precarious indeed. Insurrections occurred with astonishing regularity, and almost yearly. In this connection, the scarcity of information left by the Portuguese historians concerning Bahrein is significant. Aware of their military weakness, the Portuguese were satisfied with holding Hormuz and never really intended to occupy Bahrein permanently. Despite the erection of a factory and a fortress, the ruins of which still stand near Manama, their authority was more nominal than real, and the role played by the "capitan" was probably not very important. Even in the defense of the fortress on Bahrein, the Portuguese relied to a great extent on the good will of the Persian forces. For example, when in 1559 the newly formed Persian Gulf units of the Turkish fleet attacked Bahrein, Rais Murad, the Governor of the island, asked for and obtained the help of the Portuguese vessels from Hormuz, but the victory was achieved only when a corps of 300 Persian soldiers was brought into action.

In 1585 the Portuguese repaired the fortress of Bahrein but their power was declining. In 1602 the Persian elements in the island revolted against the Portuguese rule and called in the Persians, the coup d'etat being organized by Rokn ed-Din Mas'ud, brother of the Vizier of Hormuz and a distant relative of the Lord of Fāl, Mu'in ed-Dīn. A corps of Persian arquebusiers, under Mu'in ed-Dīn, invaded the island and reduced the Portuguese garrison.

As soon as victory was assured, the forces of Rokn-ed-Din treacherously attacked their Persian allies and the situation seemed serious, when Persian reinforcements which had been delayed en route reappeared before the island. The forces of Rokn-ed-Din were beaten and he himself seized and executed. Now the Persians had to face another menace, for the Portuguese had landed in force.

In the course of operations the Persian general was wounded and afterward died, but the Persian forces succeeded in recapturing the fort and holding the island against several attempts

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by the Portuguese and Hormuzis to recover it. The Portuguese continued to protest verbally but, being unable to interfere militarily, they were unwilling, merely for the sake of Bahrein, to disturb the new cordiality of the relations between Persia and Spain, and face alone the power of the Turks, who were a real threat in the Mediterranean. In 1622 the island of Hormuz itself was taken over by the Persians, who put an end to the Portuguese domination.

SAFAVID

Despite manifestations of energy from time to time, the bell had tolled for Portugal's maritime power and she soon had to concede her place, first to the Dutch and then to the British. The power of the latter began to equal and later to surpass that of all rivals, and the English fleet became the only one with which the inhabitants of the Gulf had to reckon.

The eclipse of Portugal and the fall of the kingdom of Hormuz created a new situation in the Gulf. In the absence of a Persian fleet, the dependencies of Hormuz were left alone to become independent and each local sheik to aspire to power. Among those who profited by the decline of Hormuz was Nasir, who made himself Imam of Mascat in 1624. He succeeded in imposing his authority, drove the Hormuzis out of Sohar, and extended his dominion over a large part of the country, creating a new political entity: Oman.

Nasir was not yet strong enough to challenge the Persian power and he hurried to submit to the Court of Isfahan. Gradually, as his successors grew more and more powerful, Mascat was taken from the Portuguese, and the forces of Oman challenged the latter even in their own colonies.

The Omanis showed themselves still more enterprising with regard to the Persians. In 1700 the island of Bahrein was attacked and taken by the forces of Imam Seif. They were, however, unable to keep it for long, and they revenged themselves by systematically interrupting Persian navigation, maltreating Persian subjects, and plundering the towns of the Persian lit-

toral. Since Persia had no fleet of her own to cope with this danger, she had to rely upon whatever help she could get from the European companies trading in the Gulf. However, these companies were not especially eager to help Persia recover Mascat, or to consolidate her naval supremacy.

In 1707, a Persian envoy, Mirza Nāsir, was sent to Bombay and another mission was prepared to visit Batavia. The English, "knowing well that if the Dutch complied with the Shah's request they would undoubtedly obtain a preference in the Persian market" did all in their power to forestall it. The English agent in Persia was instructed to "promise that as soon as the war in Europe should cease, a naval force would be sent to operate against the Mascat Arabs." The promise had the desired effect, and the Shah's intended deputation to Batavia was never dispatched.

In the meantime, the trade of the Persian Gulf was left to the fancy of the Mascat pirates. However, these were not the only pirates who operated in these parts of the world. Many Europeans, especially English nationals had chosen the lucrative business of piracy as their occupation. Among those sea captains, the most outstanding names are the Frenchman Misson, and Englishmen: Avory, William Kidd, Cornelius, and the sinister Plantain helped by Mulatto Tom.[1]

From the base of St. Mary, pirates infested the entire Indian Ocean, and in the Persian Gulf Mascat pirates were getting whatever ships had escaped, thus rendering the trade with India almost impossible. Something had to be done.

Unable to obtain the help of the British or Dutch, Persia turned to the French. Sieur Michel, representing France, readily accepted the offer and consequently a Treaty of Friendship and Commerce was signed between the two powers (September 7,

1. Tom was Avory's son by the Indian noblewoman whom he had kidnapped from the ship "Gunjsawee" (1696), in company of 100 other girls "from 12 to 18 years of age," who were also carried away to "Libertatia." This settlement of Libertatia on Saint Mary Island (off Madagascar), was founded by Misson in 1694, and fortified by Avory, and was where the European Pirates had their numerous wives. The main body of the colony was formed by freed Negro slaves who manned the piratical squadron ships.

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1708). By a secret clause, France was to provide naval transportation and assistance to Persia for the occupation of Mascat. Furthermore, to insure secrecy, that "clause" was formulated in a separate memorandum consigned to a "sealed envelope", and by Article 14 of the treaty France simply took the engagement of executing the "provisions contained in the memorandum."

However, the French were slow in executing the terms of the treaty. Mascat pirates were left free and unpunished to interrupt trade and participate in raids on ports and cities. The Court of Isfahan decided to press the matter, and a Persian Ambassador, Reza Kuli Beg, was sent to this effect to Louis XIV. During his stay in France, the Ambassador negotiated a new Treaty of Commerce clearly favorable to France, but in exchange, the Persian demanded an alliance against the Imam of Mascat. Persia was to furnish 30,000 troops and provide for the arming of the fleet. The spoils of war would be divided equally between the two countries, and after the occupation of Mascat, France was to be given possession of a fort. Furthermore, the French were to participate on equal footing with the Persians concerning the pearl fisheries of the Bahrein Islands.

Despite these favorable terms, the French were unwilling to engage in the new venture, as the extent of French naval power was very limited after the war of the Spanish Succession. Furthermore, the French were nursing the idea of an alliance with Mascat.

While the Franco-Persian negotiations were ineffectually being carried on, Sultan II, with the help of the East India Company, invaded the Bahrein Islands, and succeeded in taking the fort and the government house of Manamah, where they slaughtered hundreds of Persians. The matter was urgent and Persia had to look for another ally.

A Persian mission was dispatched to Goa in 1718 and offered the Portuguese an alliance against the Omanis with the purpose of reoccupying Bahrein. Accordingly, a Portuguese fleet sailed from the port of Kong and engaged the Omanis, who had been supplied by the British and Dutch with "powder and shots".

175 The Portuguese did very little in fighting, and even for that, they formulated conditions unacceptable to Persians who preferred to negotiate with the invaders. Bahrein was finally recovered against a payment of 8,000 tomans, and the Persian troops occupied and fortified it (1718).

The government of Bahrein was given over to Sheik Jabbara of Tahiri (a port on the Persian coast), who was chief of the Huwala and Persian Admiral of the Gulf. The chiefs of Tahīri governed Bahrein for a period of fourteen years.

This turn of events coincided with the death of the Imam of Mascat and the succession of his nephew, and Oman was ravaged by a Civil War, making its conquest relatively easy. Persia, mistrusting Portuguese designs, refused to lay siege to Mascat and the Portuguese fleet, after a winter stay at Kong, returned to India.

Shortly afterwards, however, a great number of Persian troops were concentrated around Bender Abbas for the projected invasion of Mascat. The Persian Army was to be transported either by the French royal fleet, or on board ships belonging to the French East India Co. Sieur Padery, the French Consul at Shiraz, and the promoter of this project, visited the Shah in Isfahan (1721), and during a private audience with the King and his Prime Minister, it was agreed that in exchange for the help being given Persia, France was to receive full ownership of the pearl fisheries of the Bahrein Islands.

Once again, Persia became prey to internal troubles and the insurrection of the province of Afghanistan started a Civil War which set the entire country aflame. The Persian troops were called back for the defense of the capital and the invasion of Mascat was abandoned. It was not until 1736, after the ascent to the throne of the famous Nadir, that the Persians were able to turn their attention toward Oman. However, Persia did not possess a national fleet to enforce her authority, and the lack of fidelity on the part of the local sheiks, whose vessels formed the bulk of the Persian Navy, had deprived Persia of her maritime power more than once in time of emergency. The English and

175 Dutch, too, almost invariably procrastinated when asked to lend their ships or to coöperate with the Persian land forces. Nadir therefore decided to organize a Persian Navy. His Admiral, Latif Khan, tried to purchase British ships at Bender Abbas but the British were reluctant to sell. He was advised instead to get them at the great shipbuilding center of Surat, in India. This he was able to do, though not without some difficulty, and in addition, to acquire a few foreign vessels which visited the Gulf. In this way, the Persians were able to arm a fleet of four ships (two purchased from British merchants, including the former *Northumberland,* bought for 50,000 tomans), two grabs, and some small craft. For the first time since the fall of the Sassanian Empire, the flag of the Persian Navy, a red Persian sword centered in a white ground, made its appearance in the waters of the Persian Gulf. The Persians were on the move again.

The first naval operation on schedule was the conquest of Bahrein and Kish. These islands were under the authority of Sheikh Jabbara who was the Commodore of the Persian Navy. However, Jabbara had refused to recognize the coup d'etat by which Nadir had become king, and refused to pay him allegiance.

The new fleet set sail for Bahrein in May 1736 with some four thousand men aboard. The time was well chosen as Sheikh Jabbara had gone in pilgrimage to Mekka and the island was defended by a small garrison. The expedition easily destroyed the forces of Jabbara, and the government of Bahrein was given to Sheik Nasir, the head of the Abu Muhair tribe of the Persian littoral. The following year the Persian forces occupied Oman. However, neither the local sheiks nor the European traders were happy about the existence of a strong regular Persian Navy and worked against it.

There were frequent mutinies among the crews, the main body of which was composed of sailors subject to various sheiks from whom they secretly received orders. Such mutinies not only made it possible for the local sheiks to retain their independence, but also favored the existence of pirates who, profit-

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ing by the momentary disorder, made commerce impossible. There is reason also to believe that in most cases the mutinies were supported by European powers, which carried on the main trade of the Persian Gulf. An illustration was the mutiny of 1740, in which the British East India Company openly favored the mutineers, and the Dutch, who at first backed the loyalist troops, suddenly made a *volte face* and supported the rebels. It is certainly strange that negotiations between the loyalists and the mutineers were carried on in English, and that an Englishman served as spokesman for the mutineers, while the Persian Admiral had to use an interpreter to deal with his own men.

Despite the difficult situation, the Persians were strong enough to keep peace and order in these waters until 1747, when the assassination of Nadir started another Civil War and the fleet was forgotten amid other cares. Naturally, the local chiefs or tribal shieks profited by the turn of events to recover their lost strength and consolidate their independence. Among those who bid for power were the Utūb.[1]

THE UTUB

The Utūb, one of the clans of Jumailah, a subdivision of 'Aniza tribe, were originally from the province of Aflaj in central Arabia. Following the general pattern of the nomadic Arab migration, they naturally looked towards the regions of the Persian Gulf where the prosperous pearl fishing and trade offered them the opportunity for better living.

Unlike the invasion of the great tribes, the Utūb had infiltrated in small groups and with the consent of the actual occupants, the Beni Khalid, they had settled on several points of the Persian Gulf littoral, the territory of Kishm and Zobara, with the main center at Grain (now Koweit), all of which were under the sovereignty of Persia.

They had formed a confederation in order to protect themselves against the economic and political pressure of other tribes. This confederation of the Utūb was led by three families: Al Sabah, Al Khalifah, and Al Jalahimah. Special duties were

1. "Geneology of Sheiks of Bahrein," p. 48.

● 176 assigned to each family. Al Sabah performed administrative functions (generally their Sheik was the head of the confederation.); Al Jalahimah were to superintend and control the maritime affairs, while the Al Khalifah headed the mercantile activities.

As time went by, the Utūb reached a high degree of commercial prosperity, and Al Khalifah accumulated a great fortune, apparently at the expense of their associates. This fact motivated Sabah to put Muhammed, the head of Al Khalifah, under arrest. But Muhammed, with the help of his brother, escaped to Zobara where he was rejoined by other members of his clan.

The head of Al Khalifah was the son of Faisal, and was originally from Zafra, a village in the territory of Bu Dhabi. Muhammed had two sons, Fazil and Khalifah, whose descendents became known respectively as Al Fazil and Al Khalifah. These two brothers moved at an early age to the newly founded settlement of Grane, and entered the pearl fishing trade. Both were enterprising and soon prospered, becoming leading merchants. It was with this background that Muhammed became head of Al Khalifah.

After their escape to Zobara, Al Khalifah fortified this town by building a stone wall around it, provided a fort with watch tower to guard the sea shore, and prepared for defense. The timely death of Sabah (1762), relieved them from the threat of revenge by their kinsmen, and they were able to carry on undisturbed their commercial activities.

Soon it was the turn of Al Jalahimah to secede from the federation. They left Koweit and settled at Roweisah on the Arabian mainland. Thus there were now three distinct groups: the Al Sabah at the original settlement at Koweit, the Al Khalifah at Zobara, and the Al Jalahimah at Roweisah.

As the prosperity of Zobara depended on the trade of Bahrein,[1] Al Khalifah persuaded the Sheik of Bushir, who had

1. Raynal, a contemporary writer, estimates the annual amount of pearls fished in and around Bahrein at 3,600,000 French livres (tournois). (Livre Sterling = 22 10 livres tournois (1776).

authority over Bahrein, to lease them the island. As Governor of Bahrein and Sheik of Zobara, Muhammed exercised his authority under Persian protection with the obligation of paying taxes to the treasury of Shiraz, in Fars.

Under Muhammed and his son Khalifah, the taxes and tribute were paid regularly. Upon the death in 1799 of the Shah of Persia, Karim Khan, the new Sheik, Ahmed, became recalcitrant. He refused to pay tribute, arrested the Persian representative, and looted the Persian gallivat that had been sent to Bahrein to collect taxes. A unit of the Persian fleet appeared in short order off Zobara (1782) and the Sheik hurried to pay the tribute that was due and to renew his allegiance to the throne.

Not long afterward, however, taking advantage of the Civil War raging in Persia, Ahmed again refused to pay tribute and the Governor of Bushir had to send a fleet to recover the island and punish the Sheik. At the news of its approach, the Al Khalifah plundered the island and took refuge at Zobara on the mainland. The Persian fleet started a systematic blockade and the Sheik offered to negotiate, restore the loot, and pay all damages. This offer was refused, and the Persian troops landed near Zobara and inflicted severe damage on the settlements of the Al Khalifah along the coast. Its mission completed, the Persian army re-embarked for Bahrein, which was put under the direct control of the Sheik of Bushir, who named his son Governor of the island.

During these military operations, the Al Khalifah were aided by the Al Jalahimah, who attempted several diversions against Bahrein and interrupted Persian shipping. To procure the help of the Al Jalahimah seamen, the Sheiks of Zobara had promised them "grants of land, money, and exclusive privileges of tenure". As soon as the Persians left they refused to keep their pledges, and their kinsmen retired to Khor Hassan where, under the leadership of their chief, the famous Ramah ibn Jaher, they allied themseves with other divisions of their tribe (known in

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the annals of the Gulf as the Jawāsim,[1] and started a feud with the Al Khalifah.

Despite the accession to power of the founder of the Kadjar Dynasty, wars of succession were still raging in southern Persia and several years passed before he could pacify the maritime provinces. The time was ripe for the Utūb to take their revenge.

The Al Khalifah invaded Bahrein and routed the Governor, Nasir al Mazkur, who fled to Bushir to ask for the aid of the Persian Army. The Provincial Governor, seeing an excellent opportunity to reduce the power of the already too influential Sheik of Bushir, refused to send the Persian troops.

On the other hand, to forestall a punitive expedition from Persia, the Al Khalifah had declared their readiness to pay tribute. Under these circumstances, they were authorized to hold the island and govern it in the name of the Persian Governor of Fars. This was consistent with the Persian tradition of power politics. Lacking a strong fleet, they usually dealt separately with each sheik, according him internal autonomy, and contenting themselves with receiving homage and tribute. In the event of a persistent refusal on the part of a sheik to pay taxes and tribute—and the word "persistent" is important because taxes generally were not paid at regular intervals—the Persian fleet, or the fleet of a subject sheik paid a visit to the island and called the errant chief to order.

For example, in 1799 the Imam of Mascat attacked the forces of Bahrein, which had discontinued payment of taxes levied upon all vessels passing from India through the Gulf. Accordingly, the Imam on board his frigate *Ganjawa*, with a fleet of three square-rigged ships and sixty bughlas, headed for Bahrein. The battle that took place resulted in the capture of three of the Utūbi vessels, but the Bahreinis were successful in defending the island. Immediately thereafter, the Utūbi Sheiks hastened to renew their allegiance to Persia by paying the tribute due from the preceding year and the Imam suspended his attack.

1. From Qasim, the common ancestor of the tribe. In the Gulf region, the guttural Arab Q is softened and pronounced as "J" in English.

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Three years later, however, the affairs of Bahrein again necessitated intervention, and again the forces of Mascat attacked Bahrein and succeeded in driving out the Utubi, who fled to Zobara and sought the help of the Wahhabi Emir. By now the Wahhabis had extended their power to the Arab coast of the Persian Gulf, and the Sheiks of the mainland were either their allies or their vassals.

Bahrein was occupied by Seif ibn Ali, sent by the Imam of Mascat as Governor and Commandant of the island. Shortly afterward, with the help of the Wahhabis, the Utūbi Sheiks surprised the Imam's garrison in Bahrein and invaded the island. Seif ibn Ali fled to Mascat, and the Imam once more had to dispatch a strong naval force to Bahrein which occupied the island without difficulty.

The Sheik of Bahrein, Salman, agreed to pay tribute to the Imam who acted under authority of the Persian Government. Furthermore, to guarantee his good faith, he dispatched his brother Muhammed to Mascat as hostage.

As vassals of the Imam, Bahrein forces participated in the British naval operations against Ras-ul-Khayma. As reward for attacking the Jawāsim, the Sheik approached the British and required that Great Britain "lend him such support as will enable him to remain undisturbed at Bahrein," but the Bombay Government was friendly with the Imam of Mascat and "abstained from all interference."

The Sheik of Bahrein then complotted with the Wahhabis who were fighting the Imam. Their combined forces invaded the island and chased the Mascat Governor. The uprising was well timed because Muhammed, who was hostage at Mascat, had died recently, thus freeing Sheik Salman of any apprehension concerning the well being of his brother.

As the Wahhabi soldiers gained control of the island, they proved themselves real oppressors, and tried by force to convert the inhabitants to their own faith. When Sheik Salman protested this unjust treatment, his brother Abdallah, and sev-

176 eral other members of his family were carried away as hostages to the Wahhabi capital Dar'yah (1809).

In Bahrein, resistance to Wahhabi domination continued and the remaining Sheiks, under the leadership of Abdar Rahman ibn Mubarak, carried on the struggle. When the Wahhabi threatened to execute their hostages, the young Sheik replied: "Go back and tell the Amir that we have forgotten our relatives, and if our sails could carry us to Dar'yah, we would raze it to the ground." However, despite their bravery, they could do little against the Wahhabi without outside help.

The Imam, busy fighting on other fronts, was not able to help directly, and had to appeal to the forces of the Shah of Persia, in whose name he ruled the island. To this end, his representative, Sheik Ali, "bearing costly gifts," was sent to Shiraz to secure the cooperation of the Prince-Governor of the province. At the same time he wrote a letter to his friend, Sheik Nasir of Bushir, requesting him to use his influence in securing the assistance of the Prince and "enclosing a blank sheet bearing his seal, to be filled in with the conditions and the amount of tribute which the Persian Government wished to impose." His appeal was favorably received and "a body of two hundred Persian horsemen and 2,000 foot soldiers' embarked at Bushir to join him. Bahrein was invaded, Wahhabi forces expelled, and the island once more given back to the Utūbi. As the Persian forces were threatening the invasion of Wahhabi territory, the Bahrein hostages were released and were permitted to return to the island. Salman and his brother reaffirmed their submission and renewed their allegiance to Persia.

Thus at the end of the first decade of the 19th century, Persia's foothold on Bahrein seemed strong and secure, and the old equilibrium of the Gulf reestablished. However, a new factor was soon introduced in the old game, changing the equilibrium of the Gulf.

This new factor was the direct intervention of the East

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India Company. As we have seen previously, the English became active in this part of the world at the beginning of the 17th century, but so far, except for a few instances, their main purpose was the trade of silk and draperies, and they very cautiously kept themselves from nursing any desire to annex, or to hold militarily, ports in the Gulf.[1] However, the events in Europe—struggle with French—and in India—wars with Tippoo Sahib and the planned invasion of Afghan ruler, Zaman Shah—, had changed the conception of the security of the Indian Empire.

It is true that two centuries after Armada, once more the "Wooden walls of England" had stopped a foreign assault and saved the country. However the "Corsican Master of Europe" was not easily discouraged, and it was generally believed that the French Army would try to reach India by crossing Persian territory, provisioning themselves en route. In the so called Bonaparte's plan of 1798, the supplies were to come from the Ile de France (Mauritius) and were to be landed at Bassorah, Bender Abbas, and other Persian ports. To forestall the French design, an East India's envoy, Malcolm, was sent to Persia in 1800 in order to negotiate a Commercial Treaty. Under cover of the Commercial negotiations, Malcolm demanded the cession to the Company, of the Island of Kishm, Hanjam, and Khark in the Persian Gulf. This raised strong opposition from the Persian Government; even the accepted bribe by the Minister of Records[2] did not overcome his opposition, and the intended article had to be withdrawn. Despite this set back, the British were successful in renewing their agreement with the Imam of Mascat (concluded in 1798), by which the Imam promised to expell the French from his possessions and authorized the English to fortify their Factory at Bender Abbas. "mounting guns thereon, as many as they list, and to forty or

1. Raynal who writes in 1776 is amazed that the English "had not even thought of establishing themselves in Bahrein Island"; and adds "we do not know why."
2. Mirza Shafi who later became Prime Minister.

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175 fifty English gentlemen (officers) residing there, with seven or eight hundred English Sepoys."

Subsequently, the Bombay Government tried to line up other alliances with the Wahhabi rulers of Hasa and with the Sheiks of Bahrein. However, these were emergency measures; the alliance with Persia remained the main purpose, and the Indian Government had kept "the Pashalik of Baghdad as a lure" to detach this country from the French.

Persia, faced with necessities of war with Russia, could not neglect the possibility of the French alliance, and consequently the Treaty of Finkenstein (May 4, 1807) was signed between the two countries. By Article 8, Persia takes the engagement to cease all political communication or commercial intercourse with England, to declare war on that Power, and to expell the Consuls, factors, or other agents of the East India Company residing in Persia and in the ports of the Persian Gulf. Article 11 stipulates "in case of a French fleet arriving in Persian Gulf or in the port belonging to H. M. the Emperor of Persia, she would be given all facilities and help that she might need." The following Article speaks clearly of the possibilities of a joint invasion of India by combined land and sea forces of Persia and France.

As soon as the treaty was signed, the East India Company planned the occupation of principal islands in the Persian Gulf. Furthermore, they contemplated setting up a friendly king in Persia by restoring to the throne an obscure pretender of the deposed Zand Dynasty, Najaf Ali, who was already receiving a pension of 400 rupees a month. This alarmed Persia, and she sought the help of France in the Persian Gulf. The French agreed to provide their fleet, but in exchange they were granted "forever and in full property the island of Khark." (Article 17 and 18, Commercial Treaty January 1808). However, the inability of the French to help the Persians in the war with Russia, changed the picture, and the British were able to conclude with Persia the preliminary Treaty of March 12, 1809.

Article V and VI of that treaty assured the Persian Govern-

ment of the good intentions of the East India Company, and affirmed that British troops sent to the Persian Gulf would be at "the disposal of His Majesty the King of Persia," and would remain at Khark or any other port if H. M. so desired. The extent of the forces stationed in the Persian Gulf was to be settled in the Definitive Treaty. 175

The Definitive Treaty was signed on November 25, 1814. Article XI reads as follows:

> Should His Persian Majesty require assistance from the English Government in the Persian Gulf, they shall, if convenient and practicable, assist him with Ships of War and Troops. The Expenses of such Expedition shall be accounted for and defrayed by the Persian Government, and the above Ships shall anchor in such Ports as shall be pointed out by the Persian Government, and not enter other Harbours without Permission, except from absolute Necessity.

By the stipulation of the above Article, the British were to assist Persia in policing the waters of the Persian Gulf and act as a Persian naval force whenever their help was required. By implication, this clause created a legal basis for England's intervention in the local affairs and from the role of partner, they assumed little by little, that of arbiter, and at the end of the 19th century, the Persian Gulf became for all purposes, a British lake.

However, to understand the importance of the Persian Gulf to Great Britain, one should always bear in mind the great events in European history, and particularly the antagonism between Russia and England since the defeat of Napolean's armies. To stop Russian forces from reaching the warm waters of the Persian Gulf, the policy of Britain was, on one hand, to strengthen the hands of Persia and Afghanistan by allying herself with them, and on the other hand to temporize, by satisfying the appetite of Russia even at the expense of her allies.

These two contradicting axioms characterized the policy pursued first by East India Company and then by Great Britain in the Persian Gulf. To each Russian increase of influence—political, military, or commercial—in Persia proper, there cor-

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175 responds on the part of England, an increase of activities in the Persian Gulf.

To strengthen her position in these waters, it was important for the English Navy to hold possible operational bases and strategic ports or islands. Bahrein by its geographical location was best suited to afford such a position, and England did all in her power to keep it in friendly hands.

It is in the light of these remarks that the contemporary history of Bahrein should be read.

In 1814, Captain William Bruce, the British Resident at Bushir, went to Bahrein and assured the Sheik of British neutrality in the invasion of Bahrein which was being threatened by the Imam of Mascat. The price of this neutrality was the promise by the Sheik that "his ports were ever open, and should continue so to [the British], and every aid at all times rendered to [British] vessels, whenever they should arrive." To convince the Sheik of Britain's "friendly dispositions," Captain Bruce said that he was ready, "although not authorized by the Government, to draw up a few articles of agreement, which we would exchange, and [that he had] no doubt but that they would be approved of, and be sanctioned by the British Government. [The Sheik] was highly satisfied with this."

Actually, when the forces of Mascat attacked Bahrein, Bruce offered his good offices, which were rejected by the Imam. The Imam's claim over Bahrein was based on a firman he had received from the Persian Government with investiture over the Islands of the Persian Gulf. A difference of interpretation developed, and the Governor of Fars held the view that the Government of Bahrein was relieved of his direct authority.

In 1816, while promising military aid to the Imam of Omam against Bahrein, and fixing the annual tribute of the island group at 10,000 tomans in the event of its conquest, the Governor of Fars secretly negotiated with the Sheik of Bahrein, received tribute from him, and even presented him with a "robe of honor." The attack carried on against Britain

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by the forces of Imam failed, probably due to the intervention of the Persian forces in the island, for in April 1818, we see the Imam sending a messenger to Teheran protesting to the Shah the duplicity of the Governor; the messenger was not permitted to proceed to the capital, however, and was instructed to send his message by courier.

About this time (1817), Bruce represented the Sheik of Bahrein as affording the fullest and most effective aid in his power, in grain and stores of all kinds, to the Jawāsim pirates. He added that it was "impossible under these circumstances to look on Bahrein in any other light than that of a piratical port."

Britain had decided to destroy the forts and the Arab warships that had survived the expedition of 1809 against Ras al Khayma, and Sir Evan Nepean, Governor of Bombay, in the spirit of the Treaty of 1814 with Persia, sent a letter to the Prince of Shiraz explaining the object of the British expedition, and requesting the collaboration of the Persian Government. An expedition under the command of W. G. Keir was sent to the Persian Gulf (1820) to act against pirates. The expedition did not confine its operations to the southern coast of the Gulf and against the pirates, but also destroyed trade ships belonging to the Arab chiefs on the Persian side. It is true that, upon the protest of the Persian representatives, the Government of India paid compensation to the injured parties, but lack of wood and construction facilities prevented the chiefs from replacing their losses, and so the aim of the British was accomplished.

The truth of the matter is that the expedition hid behind its humanitarian mask the desire to eliminate competitors. Sir John Malcolm wrote in 1833:

> I have conversed with some of the most intelligent European agents on the trade with the Gulf of Persia, who informed me, that a great portion of the piece goods, before sent in English vessels from Calcutta, are now conveyed in small Arab and Indian craft from Bombay, and being at cheaper freight, the sale of such articles is increased. . . . This fact, which is satisfactory as showing a cause for increasing sale of British manufacture, and as tending to change the habits of lawless men, is completely contrary to the interests of the owners of British ships formerly occupied in this trade . . . who had formerly all the freight which is now carried on by Arabs.

175 Another tangible result of this expedition was the signing of a General Treaty with the chiefs of the Gulf, with the exception of Rahamah, the "faithful servant" of the Persian Government. The Treaty is commonly known as the Flag Treaty from Article 3 which stipulated that all "friendly Arabs" should carry "by land and by sea" the "White pierced Red" flag of the British Navy.

To overcome the objections of the Persian Government, Article 4 specified that the Sheiks should continue their "former relations, except that they shall be at peace with the British Government and shall not fight with each other; and the flag shall be a symbol of this and nothing further."

Article 5 gave British vessels the right to stop Arab ships and to exercise "register and clearance"; Article 6 provided that each of the chiefs should send "an envoy for the transaction of [his] business" to reside near the British Residence at Bushir; and Article 7 provided for future collaboration against those chiefs who should not conform to the spirit of the treaty. The remaining Articles were humanitarian and commercial clauses, providing, among other things, for the amelioration of the condition of prisoners of war, prohibition of the export of slaves, and permission to friendly Arabs to enter the ports controlled by England.

The duration of the pact was described in Article 1 as "forever," and it was stated that it should not concern "an acknowledged war which is proclaimed, avowed, and ordered by Government against Government" (Article 2).

The treaty was signed in February 1820 by the representative of Bahrein in the name of the brothers Salman and Abdallah ibn Ahmed, who ruled the island jointly.

The signing of the treaty did not give the chiefs independence; its avowed purpose was merely to maintain the status quo in the Gulf.

To give further proof of the good intentions of the East India Company, its representative, Bruce, in a draft of a Treaty concerning the slave trade signed in 1820 with the Prince Gov-

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ernor of Fars, guaranteed the "historical rights of Persia over the Bahrein Island." 175

The treaty was not ratified by the Shah, however, on the ground that the Prince had no right to negotiate directly with a foreign power, which would create a dangerous precedent, and Bruce shortly afterward left for India.

Bahrein at that time was under the Government of the Imam of Mascat, to whom the Sheiks of Bahrein paid an annual tribute of 40,000 thalers. Now the central government of Persia directed the Governor of Fars to occupy Bahrein militarily, but the help of the British fleet could not be secured, and the small fleet of Persian crafts gathered for the expedition were not able to leave ports on time due to stormy weather prevailing in the Gulf.

However, soon the Sheik of Bahrein, Salman, died, and the new Sheik, Abdallah, received the Persian Supervisor, Iskander Khan, with due respect and in the letter sent the Governor of Fars, he reaffirmed his submission and renewed his allegiance to the throne.

Soon war broke out between Russia and Persia, and two years later the latter was beaten and the Treaty of 1828 established Russian influence at Teheran.

The British were seriously alarmed at the turn of events and the Bombay Government, contemplating the occupation of Khark, intensified its activities.

Once more the Imam of Mascat attacked Bahrein, and although the expedition of 1828 was not a military success, an agreement was reached and a tribute of Bahrein was payed to the Imam. This became possible by the marriage of the Princess, a sister of the Governor of Fars to the Imam of Mascat.

Soon trouble started in Bahrein, and in 1831 the Imam of Mascat made overtures to the Wahhabi, hoping to receive permission to rule the islands of Bahrein as the tributary of the Emir. The Emir, however, preferred to receive tribute from the Utûbi Sheiks with whom he had just signed a Treaty of Alliance by which they had agreed to pay him an annual tribute

175 of 2,000 thalers in return for aid against Mascat. It should be noted that at this time the whole line of the coast was dominated by the Wahhabis. In 1834, however, the Sheik of Bahrein threw off allegiance to the Wahhabis, and even ventured to blockade Qatif and Ojair.

Despite the fact that the East India Company kept an agent at Bahrein, their influence was not important since the Company had to send several of its cruisers to blockade the island after its agent there had been bastinadoed and a considerable sum of money taken from him.

The Government of Bahrein was shared at this time by the two Sheiks, Abdallah and Khalifah, who were uncle and nephew. The death of Khalifah (1834) created a series of incidents which troubled the countries of the Gulf for many years, for the old Sheik did not want to share either revenue or power with his nephew, Muhammad, who succeeded his father. Quarrels and intrigues followed, and the powers principally interested in Bahrein either failed to intervene, or interfered less actively in favor of one or the other. In this display of power politics, Persia sided with Abdallah, while England supported Muhammad. In 1838, Khorshid Pasha, who conquered Nejd for Egypt, was preparing to invade Bahrein. Abdallah openly declared his submission to the Persian Government, and the following year a Persian agent, Haji Kasim, with an escort of Sarbaz (Persian regular troops), came to reside in the island. At this point the British Government, backing Persia, intervened, and intimated that any attempt of Egyptians in that direction would be met by force.

Shortly afterwards, war broke out between England and Persia, and an English naval force occupied the island of Khark in 1842. Bahrein, under the authority of Abdallah, remained on the side of Persia. Muhammad, nephew of the Sheik of Bahrein, addressed a letter to British authorities offering his services in exchange for assistance against his uncle. With the blessing of the British and the help of the Wahhabi, Muhammed was, in 1843, able to arm a strong fleet and drive

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the old Sheik from Bahrein, establishing himself at Manama. Abdallah took refuge at Bushir, where he was received with a salute of three rounds of musketry by the Sarbaz garrison, who were on parade for the occasion.

Abdallah proposed to pay tribute to Persia and to leave his son as hostage at the Court if the Shah would agree to help him recover his Sheikdom. Meanwhile, playing both sides, he addressed the English Resident and, assuring him of his friendship, told him of the proposition made to him by the Persians; he added that he had made a "convenience" of them to suit his own purposes. However, Britain had decided not to permit the return of Abdallah, and the Persian Government, informed of Abdallah's transactions with the British, did not believe it wise to help him.

Shortly after in 1848, Abdallah died, and his son continued the struggle until 1859, when he was proclaimed a public enemy and expelled from Damān by British forces. Thus, Muhammad was left to govern his island as a reward for the treaty he had signed three years before with England, according to which, as "chief of Bahrein," he had "engaged and bound himself, purely out of friendship" to suppress slave trade in the Gulf.

In 1851 a quarrel arose between Muhammad and the Wahhabi Emir, in consequence of which the latter appeared in Qatar, and having drawn the tribes of that district away from the Utūbi cause, threatened to occupy Bahrein. This was prevented by the appearance on the scene of British warships, and an agreement was reached by which the town of El-Bidā was restored to Bahrein.

In 1855-56 correspondence passed between the Wahhabi Emir and the British representative as a consequence of the reassertion by the Emir of his claim to suzerainty over the Bahrein Islands, a claim which was not recognized by the British Government because of their engagements with Persia.

The second Anglo-Persian War and the Treaty of Paris (1857) had made England the undisputed mistress of the

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Gulf, and local sheiks turned more and more toward Britain. In her ultimatum to Persia on November 22, 1856, for example, Britain had demanded that "Persia . . . make an arrangement respecting Bender Abbas, satisfactory to the Imam of Mascat, the friend of England." By the Treaty of Paris, she succeeded in forcing Persia to sign the convention concerning slave traffic in the Gulf.

In 1861, Muhammad, as the "independent Ruler of Bahrein," signed a Perpetual Treaty of Peace and Friendship with England, the most important provisions of which were the following:

> The Sheik agreed to refrain from all maritime aggression, slavery, piracy, or war, as long as he should receive the support of the British Government in maintaining the security of his possessions against "similar aggressions directed against them by the Chiefs and tribes" of the Gulf. (Article 2.)
>
> The Sheik promised that "no act of aggression or retaliation shall be committed at sea by Bahrein" without the consent of the British Resident, who would play the role of arbiter. (Article 3.)
>
> British subjects would be permitted to reside and carry on lawful trade in Bahrein and would be granted "most favored nation" status. Their goods were to be subject only to an ad valorem duty of 5% in cash or in kind. In addition, settlement for "all offenses which they may commit, or which may be committed against them, shall be reserved for the decisions of the British Resident, provided the British Agent, located at Bahrein, shall fail to adjust them satisfactorily.
>
> "In like manner," the article continued, "the British Resident will use his good offices for the welfare of the subjects of Bahrein in the ports of the maritime Arab tribes of this Gulf in alliance with the British Government." (Article 4.)

The treaty thus established special relations between the two parties, but the Sheik continued to declare himself a vassal of Persia.

About this time, the followers of the exiled Muhammed Ibn Abdallah created some difficulty in Bahrein for the Sheik, and a Persian official was sent by the Governor of Fars to cope with the situation. The instigators of this movement were chased from Bahrein, and took refuge in Turkish territory asking Ottoman protection. Ali Pasha, Grand Visir, sought to interfere on behalf of the exiled chief. The Persian Government protested

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by backing the ruling Sheik, and on April 28, 1861, its Ambassador in Istanbul submitted to the porte the following note: "Mascat and Bahrein are two places which for thousands of years up to the present have belonged to Persia. It has been customary in the last 200 years for whoever was the chief or the head of the region, to write first a letter of allegiance to the King of Persia requesting a firman of investiture,, and only after securing it would he start his governorship." 175

Muhammad Ibn Abdallah, from his base of Damān, with the help of Wahhabi continued to molest and interrupt the Bahrein shipping. In 1861, Muhammed decided to put an end to these acts of piracy and he embarked with six armed boats against the Imam. This proceeding was censored by the British, who brought pressure to force him to withdraw his ships to his own waters. The Sheik then sought through his envoy, Khalil Mirrikhi, the help of the Governor of Fars, and requested an expedition of Persian regular troops and gunboats. The British prevented the expedition by offering to expell Muhammad ibn Abdallah from Daman, which they promptly did.

Under these circumstances, the Treaty of 1861, despite its pretensions to being perpetual, could last only a short time. The failure by the Sheik to seek the advice of the British Resident alienated the British who decided to replace him with someone more docile, because, in the words of Lord Curzon, "no form of words . . . or signature could bind the crafty old fox." An English expedition landed on the island and Muhammad fled to Qatar. The fortress of Mahur, near Muharraq, was destroyed and the warships of Bahrein burned. Ali ibn Khalifa, brother of the Sheik, was put in Muhammad's place, and on September 6, 1868 signed an agreement recognizing the validity of the treaty made by his predecessor and promising to pay a fine of 100,000 Maria Theresa dollars. Muhammad was declared a pirate and forbidden to return to Bahrein.

This action by Britain and the signing of the Treaty of 1868, provoked a protest from the Persian Minister in London against the violation of their country's sovereign rights in

175 Bahrein. In his answer, Lord Clarendon, British Secretary for Foreign Affairs, assured the Persian envoy that "the British Government holds the Sheik to these engagements solely for the purpose of preventing piracy and slave trade, and of maintaining the policing of the Gulf." He added that if the Persian Government was prepared to police the Gulf, the British Government "would be relieved of a troublesome and costly duty, but if the Shah is not prepared to undertake these duties, Her Majesty's Government cannot suppose that His Majesty [the Shah] would wish that in these waters disorders and crimes should be encouraged with impunity."

He promised that "whenever it is practicable to do so, Her Majesty's Government will cause the Persian Government to be informed beforehand of any measures of coercion against himself, which the conduct of the Sheik of Bahrein may have rendered necessary." The British position was consistent with the term of the Treaty of 1814.

The exiled Sheik obtained permission to return to Bahrein, whereupon he began to intrigue against his brother. He was exiled again, this time to Koweit, but succeeded in gathering together a small force, and with the aid of his partisans, invaded Bahrein in September 1869. In the engagement that followed, Sheik Ali was killed, and Muhammad regained his Sheikdom. But one of his Lieutenants, Muhammad ibn Abdallah, subsequently rebelled, imprisoned him, and declared himself Sheik.

In the general turmoil that followed, property belonging to British subjects was damaged. This furnished a pretext for intervention, and the British fleet bombarded Manama and the neighboring regions. Muhammad and his adversary were deported to Bombay where they were imprisoned, and were later removed to Aden. Isa, a son of the deceased Sheik Ali, was installed as Sheik of Bahrein (1869).

The turn of events in Bahrein alarmed Persia, and diplomatic conversations were engaged with France in view of obtaining the help of the French fleet. A French envoy, Bouray,

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visited Teheran and proposed that in exchange for the eventual aide, France be given a 99 year lease on the island of Khark. 175

These Franco-Persian negotiations motivated the British Government to propose to Persia, through their Ambassador at Teheran (June 15, 1870), that they lease Bahrein Islands. Negotiations were carried on simultaneously at Teheran and London. The main difference of view separating the two Governments was the term of the lease. Persia was considering a short term of three to five years, while the British were asking a longer period. Negotiations were soon abandoned, but the status quo was maintained.

By now, the Turks, who had previously extended their power over the Coast of Hasa, were coveting Bahrein, and by creating different incidents, they were trying to justify their actions.

At the end of 1870, the custom officials of Baghdad suddenly decided to consider the Bahreinis as Ottoman subjects and extend to them the same duties as their own nationals. The Persian Embassy at Istanbul protested strongly, and after a rather lengthy period of negotiating, the Porte sent special instructions to the Wali of Baghdad, to the effect of considering the Bahreinis as Persian subjects and not to demand more from them than they had previously paid.

In 1871, a British man-of-war went to Qatar to demand certain taxes from the Sheik for the benefit of Bahrein. The Sheik, however, under the pretext of being a Turkish vassal, refused to submit to the British. This conduct induced Midhat Pasha, then Governor General of Baghdad, to protest to the English Consul against the interference of British warships in the territorial waters of Qatar. The Consul denied that there had been interference. The Turks then dispatched two of their warships to Qatar to protect the province against the anticipated aggression of Bahrein.

At the same time, the Turks made a representation to the English Government complaining of the British encroachment upon territory belonging to the Sultan.

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175 In his answer of August 8, 1872, addressed to the Turkish Minister, Lord Granville, the British Foreign Secretary, wrote that "pending the result of these inquiries, the Government of the Sultan can be assured that it is not the desire of Her Majesty's Government to interfere in the affairs of the Persian Gulf unless they concern matters prescribed by the treaty concluded in view of maintaining peace in these waters."

Two years later, however, a new incident took place. A few Bahreinis residing at Baghdad were drafted into the Turkish Army. The British Consulate protested to the Governor, but the incident was settled to the satisfaction of the Ottomans because the persons involved were found to have been born in Baghdad. The British Ambassador, however, made a point of saying that the British Consul "does not see any reason to treat the Bahreini as the natives of an Ottoman possession." The Ambassador then received assurances that "the Porte does not nurse any intention of considering Bahreini as his own subjects." Despite that, the Ottomans continued to claim sovereignty over the island. In a note addressed on April 14, 1874 to the Turkish Ambassador, Lord Dudley stated: "The renewal of this claim by the Sublime Porte obliges me to refer Your Excellency to the notes sent to your Government in 1851 and 1870, declaring distinctly that Her Majesty's Government did not admit any Turkish pretension considering Bahrein Island as a part of the Ottoman Empire, and if some natives of the Island in question referred to the British Consulate in Turkey for protection, it is because the latter could not refuse their good offices to the subjects of a Chief with whom Her Majesty's Government is in friendly relations."

The intensification of Turkish activities in the coastal regions opposite Bahrein had serious repercussions in the internal affairs of the island. It should be recalled, that previously the Sheik of Bahrein controlled several localities in the Qatar peninsula, and especially the township of Zobara. After the events of 1870, one of the refugee Sheiks, Nasir ibn Mubarak, with the help of his father-in-law, Qāsim, the Sheik of El Bidā,

had deprived Bahrein of its possessions on the mainland. Now Qāsim was under Turkish protection, and Nasir claimed to be the rightful Governor of Bahrein where he had many followers. In his pretension, Nasir was encouraged by the Turks who saw a good ground for their intervention in the affairs of Bahrein.

To counteract the Turkish activities, Persians had to rely more and more on the British who had given themselves the task of guaranteeing the status quo.

Neither of the two principal powers interested, (Persia, Turkey) was willing to precipitate a showdown. The Turks were satisfied with creating local incidents, then protesting to London against the British interference.

Thus, in 1875, the Porte protested against the intervention of British authorities in the affairs of Qatar. The British, backing the Sheiks of Bahrein, had bombarded the town of Zobara and attacked some of the tribes of the Qatar Peninsula, notably the Beni Hajar who were sent by the Ottomans to collect taxes.

Qāsim refused the propositions offered by the Sheik of Bahrein, who intended to reconquer Zobarā and establish a Bahreini colony there. The British Ambassador to Turkey, declared that the British man-of-war which had attacked Zobara had "probably been carrying on shooting exercises with the intention of intimidating and dispersing the Arabs."

Three years later, Nasir ibn Mubarak, assembled a force of Bedouins and attacked and destroyed Zobara. The Resident and Senior Naval Officer visited Qāsim's camp near Zobara and ascertained that no attack on Bahrein was contemplated. During the period of alarm, in order to guard the Island of Bahrein, armed ships belonging to the chief and commanded by British naval officers, were stationed to watch specified points within the limits of Bahrein waters. The threatening attitude of Nasir alarmed the British, to the point, that in February 1879, Captain Durand, First Assistant Resident, judged it necessary to take up his residence temporarily at Bahrein, with an escort of native infantry.

In June 1880, rumors began to reach Bahrein that Nasir

175 meditated an attack on the islands. Toward the end of the year he gathered a force of a few hundred Bedouins, and took up a position at Ru'ais and Abn Dhuluf on the Qatar coast, opposite Bahrein. The Arabs, however, failed to assemble a fleet, and abandoning the idea of a raid, dispersed. Nasir returned to El-Bidā.

In January 1881, Nasir wrote to the Resident, stating that he was constantly urged by persons in Bahrein to come there, and that although he had long refrained from taking this step out of deference to British authority, his forbearance had not been profitable for him. Therefore, to improve his circumstances, he now intended to proceed to Bahrein, and he hoped for the support of the British Government. He would, of course, inform the Resident of his arrival in the island.

To avoid further complications, and to assert her authority in the Gulf, Persia at this time determined to build a war fleet. The idea, however, was "discountenanced" by the British, who suspected hidden designs against "the independence of the islands and pearl fisheries of Bahrein." Despite the promise that the flotilla would be commanded by British officers and manned by Arabs and Indians, the British refused to help, and outwitted Persia by signing with the Sheik of Bahrein the Agreement of December 2, 1880.

Isa, on behalf of himself and his successors, agreed to "abstain from entering into negotiations or making treaties of any sort with any State or Government other than the British, or establishing diplomatic or consular agencies or coaling depots" in his territory, "unless with the consent of the British Government." Thus by this Agreement, Bahrein became de facto a British protectorate, although officially, with wonderful euphemism, it was, and still is, called "an independent Arab State under British protection."

All was not well for the British however. Conditions in the Gulf soon began to change. In 1885, the *Persepolis*, a screw steamship of six hundred tons and 450 horsepower, carrying four 750-mm. Krupp guns, was turned out from the dockyard

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at Bremerhaven and arrived at Bushir. The terror inspired by that first Persian vessel was such, wrote Lord Curzon, "that immediately upon her appearance any disturbance as a rule ceased.

Subsequently, Persian and Russian officers of the Cossack regiment paid visits to the south of Persia, notably to Bushir, Bender Abbas, and Hormuz. Hormuz was visited and surveyed by a military engineer; there was a rumor that a Russian coaling station was to be established on the island in the near future.

In August 1886, a messenger arrived in Bahrein from Fath Ali Khan, Persian Governor of Lar, bearing presents for Sheik Isa.

By now the Persian Gulf had attracted international interests, and in October 1891, a Mr. Strasburger was sent to the Gulf by an Anglo-French syndicate to report on the possibilities for investment of the pearl banks. He visited Bahrein and other ports with a view to obtaining information as to how the industry was conducted. The result of his inquiry did not encourage the introduction of European capital. In December 1891, the Sheik granted a concession to a British firm at Bushir for the exclusive rights to export shells, but withdrew it, on the understanding that it would not be granted to anyone else, and that the purchase and sale of shells should be free to all. The Sheik, however, imposed a heavy export duty on shells.

Recrudescence of Persian authority and foreign interests in the Persian Gulf alarmed the British. To forestall any change of heart on the part of Isa, whose desire for independence, and Persian sympathies were well known, they forced him to sign on March 13, 1892, what is known as the "Exclusive Agreement." In substance, it was a confirmation of the Agreement signed with him twelve years before.

However, besides agreeing to restrictions in Bahrein's foreign relations and to the interdiction of foreign consular agents, both of which had been previously agreed to, the Sheik bound himself "on no account to cede, sell, mortgage, or otherwise give for occupancy any part of his territory save to the British Government."

175 In March 1894, serious dissentions troubled Bahrein. Khalid ibn 'Ali, a brother of Sheik Isa, insulted Ahmed ibn Salim, one of the Sheiks of Al-i-'Ali. Sultan ibn Salamah, the head of the tribe, complained to Isa, but the Sheik neglected to give him satisfaction. Al-i-'Ali then decided to migrate from Bahrein. Isa forbade them to do so, and serious riots took place during which four persons were killed. Al-i-'Ali were successful in leaving the island, and they found refuge in Katar. Through the intervention of Sheik Qāsim ibn Muhammad, they received permission from the Ottoman to establish themselves at Zobara and to hoist the Turkish flag over their pearl fishing boats.

Zobara was claimed as an hereditary possession by Sheik Isa, but as a matter of policy, and in order to obviate conflicts on the mainland, he had left it unoccupied. Isa complained to the British, who protested to the Porte the hospitality given to "pirates." In its reply, the Porte suggested that the matter should be settled locally with Qāsim. British Resident Wilson visited Qāsim, and requested the extradition of Al-i-'Ali from Zobara, but Qāsim refused to acquiesce to the British demand.

The British ship, *Sphinx*, accordingly seized 19 boats belonging to the rebellious tribe, and conducted them to Bahrein. The Al-i-'Ali in retaliation, seized a number of boats sent from Bahrein to Zobara to bring over one of the leading members of the tribe who had made his peace with the Sheik of Bahrein.

A few Turkish troops with minor officials at their head, had some time previously been stationed at Zobara and the Ottoman flag hoisted. A small Turkish warship had also appeared on the scene and remained anchored for some time off Zobara. The situation became threatening, and in 1895, the Mutassanif of Hasa addressed a letter to the Resident reasserting Turkish pretensions, and intimating that upon failure to restore the boats seized by the *Sphinx*, an attack would be launched by the tribes of the Qatar Peninsula on Bahrein; British subjects should be removed from the island within seventeen days. The British man-of-war, *Pigeon*, which had shortly before proceeded to Bahrein and been dispatched thence

to Zobara, was ordered by local officials to depart under threat of an attack, and it was intimated that the large fleet of Arab craft lying near by was prepared for an attack on Bahrein. The two British ships opened fire on the Arab fleet, and bombarded the town of Zobara. The following morning, Sheik Qasim offered full submission, and in compliance with Captain Pelly's demands, some 120 more of the ships at Zobara were surrendered and removed to Bahrein. The Al-i-'Ali, with the exception of Sultan ibn Salamah and a few adherents, returned to Bahrein.

Sheik Qāsim was informed in February 1896 of the decision of the British Government, that as the main instigator of these disturbances, he should be fined 30,000 rupees, failing payment of which, the captured boats would be destroyed. He repudiated responsibility, asserting that he had followed the orders of the Turkish authorities. The British offered the tribes that had been involved a chance to redeem their boats by paying a proportionate share of the indemnity. The offer was taken advantage of to the extent of one-third of the total. The remaining ships were destroyed a few days after the close of the year.

In December, Sultan ibn Salamah, leader of the Al-i-'Ali, in accordance with his custom, crossed over to the mainland to hunt. A group of men of the Ammamerah tribe fell in with him at sea off Ras Tanurah, near Qatif, and murdered him with his son, nephew, and twenty-three of his followers. Since Salamah had led the rebellion against Bahrein, the Sheik naturally was somewhat reluctant to punish the Ammamerah, and was the target of some of the ill feeling aroused by the assassination.

Ali, son of Sultan ibn Salamah, supported by a Bedouin following, tried to incite some of the Al-i-'Ali to aid him in reprisals against the Ammamerah pearl banks. The Sheik, however, warned them against taking part in the venture, and the attempt failed.

Some of the Al-i-'Ali, sympathizing with the feeling of their late Sheik's son, and dissatisfied with the immunity per-

175 mitted to his murderers, crossed over to Qatar, where they joined Ali at Qarya. They subsequently attacked and plundered a Bahrein boat, carrying off pearls and monies amounring to over 1,000 rupees. Sheik Isa accepted the accomplished fact, and consented to the departure of the disaffected elements, later on authorizing the families of the men to join them on the mainland.

To prevent the local Sheik from disturbing the peace of the Gulf, the Persian and British Governments had recently signed the International Convention on traffic of arms. The two Governments in their partnership of policing the Gulf, had instructed their Navy to cooperate by tracking down the smuggling of arms between their respective territories. Consequently, the following proclamation was published by the Sheik of Bahrein:

"Be it known to all who see this that British and Persian vessels of war have permission to search vessels carrying their and our flags in Bahrein territorial waters, and to confiscate all arms and ammunition (weapons of war) in them, if those arms and ammunitions are intended for Indian or Persian ports or the Island of Bahrein. . . ."

20th CENTURY

648 At the end of the 19th century and the opening of the 20th, the Persian Gulf became the main center of international intrigue. The Russians opened a series of consulates, and organized and subsidized steamer services.

In 1901, the German firm of Prins und Sturken, of Hamburg, opened a branch in Bahrein. In February 1902, two Frenchmen, Dumas and Castelin, arrived in Bahrein to open a business, and a German assistant to Woenkhaus and Company, of Hamburg, arrived later in the same year.

Three years later, Woenkhaus who was already dealing in [227] mother-of-pearl, transferred their main center of business from Lingah to Bahrein, where they asked a concession from the Sheik for the exploitation of pearl fisheries.

Prevented by the British, they then applied to Constantinople

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ited character of the island "occupation" need not necessarily be more than the mere announcement of an intention to take possession and the continuous assertion of title.

In an inhabited territory such as the Bahrayn Islands the mere assertion of title by Iran could hardly be regarded as sufficient, if she failed to establish in the territory an organization capable of making its laws respected. For this reason, accordingly, the Bahrayn case would be analogous to the *Palmas*, rather than the *Clipperton*, case, in which the principle of "continuous and peaceful display of the functions of State" was deemed necessary to determine the title to a territory. "Territorial sovereignty," stated the Permanent Court of Arbitration in the *Palmas* award,[19] "involves the exclusive right to display the activities of a State" and that "without manifesting its territorial sovereignty in a manner corresponding to circumstances, the State cannot fulfill this duty." The same principle was asserted in the *Eastern Greenland* case[20] in which the Permanent Court of International Justice endorsed, in 1933, the principle of "the peaceful and continuous display of State authority" which the Permanent Court of Arbitration applied in 1928 in the *Palmas Island* decision.

The Iranian claim, lacking any valid legal ground, seems to depend, in the last analysis, merely on Iran's historical connections with the islands which have often been reiterated in its notes to the British Government. How significant this historical claim may be and whether it could confer title to sovereignty calls for a brief consideration.

III. Iran's Historical Claim

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The early history of Bahrayn is obscure, but the islands have been inhabited from a very early time on account of the pearl fisheries. They witnessed a number of conquerors from the time of the Babylonians in antiquity to the proclamation of British protection in the nineteenth century.

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The Persians seem to have dominated the islands before the rise of Islam in the seventh century of the Christian era, but even before this time the Arabs had already migrated into the Persian Gulf coasts and settled in Bahrayn. The rise of Islam afforded a fresh opportunity for the Arabs to gain more permanent and complete control of the islands which lasted from the seventh to the opening of the sixteenth century.[21] From Arab rule the islands passed into the hands of the Portuguese at the opening of the six-

[19] Publication of the International Bureau of the Permanent Court of Arbitration (1928), reprinted in Scott, Hague Court Reports (second series), p. 84; also in this JOURNAL, Vol. 22 (1928), p. 867.

[20] Publications of the Permanent Court of International Justice, Series A/B, No. 53.

[21] Tabari, *Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk* (ed. M. J. de Goeje, Leiden, 1879–1901), Series I, Vols. 1, 2, 3, 4, pp. 213, 745–747, 1630, 1953–1953.

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teenth century.[23] The Portuguese rule, which lasted about a century, came to an end as a result of their waning power in the Persian Gulf, when Portugal was annexed by Spain, and diverted the Portuguese forces from the East to be used in Europe. These favoring circumstances permitted the Persians to revive their interests in the Persian Gulf.

But Persian intervention in the affairs of Bahrayn, we are told by Arab historians, was prompted by internal conflict between the two rival Islamic sects.[24] For long the tribal chiefs of the two main Sunni and Shi'i sects of Bahrayn—a sectarian quarrel which wrought havoc in the Islamic countries—sought outside help against each other. Just as the Ottoman Empire had become the center of Sunni power, so Persia was looked upon by the Shi'i world as the defender of Shi'i rights.[25] During the reign of Shah Abbas (1587–1629), a great protagonist of the Shi'i cause, power in Bahrayn was then in the hands of a Sunni chief. The Shi'is appealed to Persia, and the Shah, assisted by the British, who were then pursuing the Portuguese, expelled the remaining Portuguese forces from Bahrayn and Hormuz in 1622.

From 1622 the Bahrayn Islands remained predominantly under Persian domination until 1783; but even during this period Persian rule was not an uninterrupted one, for the islands became the target of attack by neighboring rulers. In 1717 and 1720 the Arab chiefs of Muscat twice attacked the islands and wrested them from Persia; and it was not until 1737 that the islands were restored to Persian rule under the able command of Nadir Shah. Persian rule, however, remained unstable, for Nadir Shah's immediate successors became involved in a contest of supremacy over the islands with the chiefs of the Utubi tribes, who were then ruling the coast of Arabia across the bay from Bahrayn. The Utubis came originally from Najd and settled in Kuwayt, but later, with the help of the chiefs of al-Sabah tribe, rulers of Kuwayt, moved to al-Hasa and established themselves at Zubara, a town situated in the peninsula of Qatar opposite to the Bahrayn Islands.

In 1783 Shaykh Ahmad al-Khalifa, then chief of the Utubi tribes and ruler of Zubara, attacked Bahrayn and annexed it to his territory; but when Zubara was overrun by the Wahhabi forces a few years later, the Khalifa chiefs moved their seat of government to Bahrayn, abandoning their Arabian dominion.

While Bahrayn was freed from Persian rule, it never ceased to be the bone of contention among neighboring rulers, such as the Sultans of Muscat

[23] Oestrup gives the date 1507 as the beginning of Portuguese rule (The Encyclopedia of Islam, Vol. I, p. 585) which seems to be the source of the date given in the Iranian note of Aug. 2, 1928 (League of Nations Official Journal, September, 1928, p. 1. 1).

[24] Al-Nabhani, *Tarikh al-Bahreyn* (Cairo, 1924); Amin Rihani, *Muluk al-Arab* (Beirut, 1929, 2nd ed.), Vol. II, Chs. 5–6.

[25] For a discussion of this schism in the Islamic society of the sixteenth century, see A. J. Toynbee, A Study of History (London, 1934), Vol. I, pp. 346–402.

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and the Wahhabi Amirs. It was partly owing to this threat of neighboring rulers, but mainly to internal feud among members of the Khalifa family (chiefs of the Utubi tribes) that Great Britain found ample reasons for intervention.

In 1820, when Great Britain had already made her appearance on the scene in the Persian Gulf, the chiefs of Bahrayn sought British support for security from outside attack as well as for internal stability. This coincided with Britain's interests in the security of her trade relations and in the suppression of piracy and the slave trade in the Persian Gulf. It was in pursuance of this objective that Britain signed the first of a series of treaties with the Shaykhs of Bahrayn without encroaching upon their independence; but these treaties resulted later in the gradual change of the islands from independent to dependent status.

The foregoing brief sketch shows that Bahrayn, during its long and checkered history, was able to maintain a large measure of internal independence even when it had fallen under foreign control. Apart from its uncertain status in antiquity, which is hardly necessary to determine for our purpose, the islands passed under Arab rule at the opening of the seventh century and remained, either as an integral part of the Arab Empire or as a semi-independent entity, until the sixteenth century. Arab rule, accordingly, may be said to have lasted for more than eight centuries. The Portuguese rule roughly lasted for a century (*circa* 1507 to 1622), and the Persian rule (1622–1783) for a little over one and a half centuries. From a purely historical standpoint, the Persian period has left no special impact on the inhabitants of the islands, whether racial or cultural, which would distinguish it from other periods. Contrary to the Iranian contention (as stated in its note of August 2, 1928), the inhabitants of the islands have either originally migrated from Arabia or have been Arabicized under long Arab rule. They speak the Arabic language, though many of them speak Persian too, and their manners and customs are Arabian. Finally, they have been ruled since 1783 by their own Arab chiefs, even though they acknowledged British protection—a period which lasted longer than that of Persian rule. Iran's historical claim, based on a very limited past attachment, seems to carry with it the air of propaganda; it could hardly challenge Arab historical claims.

IV. British Protection

From the time when Napoleon invaded Egypt in 1798 a period of Anglo-French rivalry for the domination of Eastern waters began, and the Persian Gulf was but one portion of the field in which the struggle was fought out. When Napoleon had been eliminated, the Eastern waters, including the Persian Gulf, became an undisputed field of British influence and commerce. Britain began to prepare the way by combatting piracy and the

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slave trade, and she signed treaties with Persian Gulf chiefs by virtue of which, within a few years, she virtually became the paramount Power in the Gulf area. In a speech given to Persian Gulf chiefs on November 21, 1903,[25] Lord Curzon, in a state visit to this area, summed up the objectives of British policy and achievements during the nineteenth century as follows:

> Sometimes I think that the record of the past is in danger of being forgotten, and there are persons who ask—Why should Great Britain continue to exercise these powers? The history of your States and of your families, and the present condition of the Gulf, are the answer. We were here before any other Power, in modern times, had shown its face in these waters. We found strife and we have created order. It was our commerce as well as your security that was threatened and called for protection. . . . We saved you from extinction at the hands of your neighbors. We opened these seas to the ships of all nations, and enabled their flags to fly in peace. We have not seized or held your territory. We have not destroyed your independence, but have preserved it. . . . The peace of these waters must still be maintained; your independence will continue to be upheld; and the influence of the British Government must remain supreme.

A General Treaty for the Pacification of the Persian Gulf, the first of a series which Britain negotiated with the Gulf chiefs, was signed on January 8, 1820.[26] The treaty provided that: "There shall be a cessation of plunder and piracy by land and sea on the part of the Arabs, who are parties to this contract, for ever" [Article 1]; and that:

> If any individual of the people of the Arabs contracting shall attack any that pass by land or sea of any nation whatsoever, in the way of plunder and piracy and not of acknowledged war, he shall be accounted an enemy of all mankind and shall be held to have forfeited both life and goods. An acknowledged war is that which is proclaimed, avowed, and ordered by government against government; and the killing of men and taking of goods without proclamation, avowal, and the order of a government, is plunder and piracy [Article 2].

Article 4 required the Arab chiefs "not to fight with each other" and to maintain peace with the British Government; Article 9 prohibited slave trade and prevented the Arabs from carrying slaves in their vessels.

While this general treaty was jointly signed by the Arab Gulf chiefs, bilateral agreements were signed for its implementation in each of the chiefs' territories. With regard to Bahrayn, its agreement (February 15, 1820) provided:

> That the Sheikhs shall not permit from henceforth, in Bahrein or its dependencies, the sale of any commodities which have been procured by means of plunder and piracy, nor allow their people to sell anything

[25] Cited by A. T. Wilson, The Persian Gulf (Oxford, 1928), p. 192.

[26] See text of the treaty in C. U. Aitchison, A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads (Delhi, 1933), Vol. XI, pp. 245–247.

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175 of any kind whatsoever to such persons as may be engaged in the practice of plunder and piracy; and if any of their people shall act contrary hereto, it shall be equivalent to an act of piracy on the part of such individuals [Article 1].[27]

Article 2 required the delivery of all Indian prisoners in Bahrayn and Article 3, the final article, states the adhesion of the Shaykh to the General Pacification Treaty.

It is to be noted that there is nothing in this agreement, nor in the General Pacification Treaty, which infringed on the powers or the independence of the Shaykh of Bahrayn. Britain readily recognized the Shaykh as an independent ruler. When, accordingly, the commander of the Egyptian forces had overrun the interior of Najd in the course of his wars with the Wahhabis, and announced his intention of taking Bahrayn as part of Najd, he was informed that the British Government could not admit any claim of Egypt to Bahrayn. The British Government, it will be recalled, declined to recognize similar claims advanced by Persia on various occasions during the nineteenth century. The Ottoman authorities made overtures to the Shaykh of Bahrayn with the object of obtaining his recognition of the supremacy of the Porte. "The ministers of the Sultan," said Aitchison, "were informed that, as the British Government had had treaty relations with Bahrain as an independent power, they could not acknowledge or acquiesce in any arrangement for placing the island under the sovereignty or protection of the Porte."[28]

Rivalry among the members of the Khalifa family during the latter half of the nineteenth century was, perhaps, the principal reason which prompted Great Britain to sign further treaties with the Shaykhs of Bahrayn, with the consequential British encroachment on their independence, lest the Shaykhs should permit other Powers to control the islands. Jealousy among the chiefs, which prompted Britain to expel the ruler of Bahrayn in 1859, invited both Turkey and Persia to exploit this rivalry to their advantage. The Shaykhs began to play one Power off against another, and one of them, Shaykh Muhammad Khalifa, claimed the protection of both Turkey and Persia. The Persian flag was hoisted on the arrival of an agent of Persia, only to be pulled down and replaced by the Turkish flag on the arrival of the Turkish agent.

Great Britain made representations to both Turkey and Persia, which resulted in the disappearance of their agents, and the Shaykh's activities regarding his relations with his neighbors, as well as his powers regarding making war, piracy and the slave trade were restricted by the signing of a treaty in which a promise of British protection from foreign aggression was given. This treaty (signed on May 31, 1861), while it stated that the

[27] *Ibid.*, p. 233.

[28] Aitchison, *op. cit.*, Vol. XI, p. 191.

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Shaykh was recognized as an "independent ruler," virtually reduced the islands to the status of a protectorate. The treaty [29] stated:

> I [the Shaykh] agree to abstain from all maritime aggressions of every description, from the prosecution of war, piracy, and slavery by sea, so long as I receive the support of the British Government in the maintenance of the security of my own possessions against similar aggressions directed against them by the chiefs and tribes of this Gulf [Article 2].

And it also provided that:

> In order that the above engagements may be fulfilled I [the Shaykh] agree to make known all aggressions and depredations which may be designed, or have place at sea, against myself, territories, or subjects, as early as possible to the British Resident in the Persian Gulf, as the arbitrator in such cases, promising that no act of aggression or retaliation shall be committed at sea by Bahrein or in the name of Bahrein, by myself or others under me, on other tribes, without his consent or that of the British Government, if it should be necessary to procure it. . . .

In 1867 Shaykh Muhammad was involved in a struggle with the Chief of Qatar, the peninsular coast of Arabia, and with one of the rival chiefs of his family, supported by the Persian Government. Britain, while it tried to restrain the Shaykh from his aggressive designs on Qatar, defended Bahrayn's independence against Persia.[30] Thereupon Shaykh Muhammad was deposed by Britain and his brother, Ali ibn Khalifa, signed an agreement in which he accepted to abstain from aggression and to appeal to the British Resident as arbitrator in any quarrel with his neighbors.[31]

During the latter part of the nineteenth century the Ottoman authorities in Arabia and Iraq made attempts to extend their influence to Bahrayn; but both Britain and the Shaykh of Bahrayn protested to the Ottoman Porte that Bahrayn was an independent country. In 1880 the ruler of Bahrayn, Shaykh Isa ibn Ali al-Khalifa, signed an agreement with Great Britain in which he agreed to abstain from entering into negotiations or making treaties with any foreign Power without her consent. The agreement, dated December 22, 1880,[32] consisting of a single article, stated:

> I, Isa Ibn Ali Al-Khalifeh, Chief of Bahrein, hereby bind myself and successors in the Government of Bahrein to the British Government to abstain from entering into negotiations or making treaties of any sort with any State or Government other than the British without the consent of the said British Government, and to refuse permission to any other Government than the British to establish diplomatic or consular

[29] *Ibid.*, pp. 234–236.

[30] Major General Sir Henry Rawlinson, England and Russia in the East (London, 1875), pp. 109–111; Aitchison, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

[31] Text in Aitchison, *op. cit.*, pp. 236–237. [32] *Ibid.*, p. 237.

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agencies or coaling depots in our territory, unless with the consent of the British Government. . . .

175 In 1892 this agreement was supplemented by another in which Shaykh Isa reluctantly accepted further limitations upon his powers. The text of the agreement of March 13, 1892,[34] is as follows:

> 1. That I [Shaykh Isa] will on no account enter into any agreement or correspondence with any Power other than the British Government.
> 2. That without the assent of the British Government, I will not consent to the residence within my territory of the agent of any other Government.
> 3. That I will on no account accede, sell, mortgage or otherwise give for occupation any part of my territory save to the British Government.

These two agreements seem to have placed the Bahrayn Islands under British protection by the Shaykh's acceptance of British advice in the conduct of foreign relations. When, in the following year, the Ottoman Porte claimed that the people of Bahrayn were regarded as Ottoman subjects within Ottoman territories and objected to British officials taking up the cases of Bahrayn subjects suffering from piracy, the British Government replied that Bahrayn was under "British protection."[35]

175 In 1900 a British Political Agency, subordinate to the Political Resident 640 in the Persian Gulf, was established in Bahrayn. In 1909 Shaykh Isa agreed not to allow the establishment in Bahrayn of post offices by any foreign government other than the British. In 1914 Shaykh Isa agreed that he would not himself, nor would he allow any foreign interest to, exploit the oil resources of Bahrayn without the approval of the British Government."

The foregoing treaty relations, often referred to as constituting "protection," have indeed touched upon matters beyond those normally covered in treaties between the protecting and the protected states. The Shaykhs of Bahrayn have not only given up some of their powers regarding the conduct of foreign relations—an action which is normal in international practice—but they have also alienated certain attributes of their internal sovereignty which would cast serious doubt as to whether Bahrayn is a *bona fide* protectorate. The status of Bahrayn, which constitutes a peculiar juridical position, is difficult to define in terms of modern international law; but this peculiarity raises the very issue whether Bahrayn's status, the legacy of various legal transactions made at a time when the Eastern World was outside the pale of international law, should be defined merely in terms of modern juridical rules.

V. The Juridical Status of Bahrayn

646 Under the general principles of Muslim law the Bahrayn Islands, as Muslim territory, are regarded as part of the *Dar al-Islam* (dominion of

[34] *Ibid.*, p. 238.
[35] *Ibid.*, p. 196. [36] See text, *ibid.*, p. 239.

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adequate motor-bus communications with most of the villages. 361

Manama is the shipping centre of the Gulf pearl industry,[1] 361
and steamers connect regularly with India, Persia, and Iraq. 228
Bahrain harbour is also the centre of a considerable coastal and pearling trade by dhows, as well as the local headquarters of its fishing industry. Other local industries are dhow-building and 396
the manufacture of sailcloth and reed matting. Much of the 501
import and export trade from al-Hasa and its hinterland passes 285
through Bahrain, and this created an important source of 439
revenue during the years in which Aramco was developing its
oilfields on the Saudi coast. Lately, however, the Saudis have 651
perceived the advantage of conducting this trade for themselves. By establishing a high-cost re-entry permit, they have discouraged the foreign staff of the oil company from doing its week-end shopping in Bahrain, and their policy is to increase the port and market facilities of the two Saudi coastal towns opposite the island—Damman and Al Khobar. In Bahrain there is a duty of 5 per cent ad valorem on essential imports such as food and clothing; non-essential imports are subject to higher duties, ranging between 15 per cent on tobacco and liquor, and 10 per cent on luxuries.

History and Foreign Relations

The presence in the northern part of Bahrain Island of 175
numerous burial tumuli indicates very early human inhabitants, but their identity, which was at one time thought to be Phoenician, remains unknown. Bahrain's situation and natural harbour facilities suggest that from the earliest days of sea navigation in the Gulf the port was important. Its recorded history, however, dates only from 1507, when the Portuguese occupied the island. They built a fort of which the ruins survive, but were driven out in 1602 by an Arab invasion from Persia. Bahrain was held by Persia intermittently until 1783, when it was conquered by Arabs from the mainland. Since 1816 it has been ruled by the Khalifa family of the Utubi tribe, which in 1820 first entered into treaty relations with the East India Company. But the Persian Government has never ceased to claim sovereignty over the island and at intervals has protested against British treaties with the Shaikh. The Persian claim is based on a British Note of 27 April 1869 in which (the Persians allege)[2] Lord Clarendon recognized their title to sovereignty over the

[1] This has long been important, and in the 1830's the fisheries were estimated to bring in some £300,000 to £400,000 a year.

[2] The Persian claim was disposed of by Sir Austen Chamberlain in a Note of 18 January 1928. See League of Nations, *Official Journal*, May 1928, pp. 606–7.

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175 island and was referred to the League of Nations in 1927 and ensuing years, when Persia protested against an Anglo-Saudi treaty which bound King Ibn Saud not to interfere with the Shaikh of Bahrain and other 'Gulf Chiefs'. Persia again protested when, in 1930 and 1934, the Shaikh granted oil concessions to Western companies. The claim has steadily been maintained by Dr Moussadeq and by the Zahedi Government. It is not popular with Bahrain's inhabitants.

The Shaikh's relations with Britain are regulated today by agreements of 22 December 1880 and 13 March 1892, by which he bound himself not to enter into any relationship with a foreign government other than the British without the latter's consent. In a letter of 14 May 1914 the Shaikh undertook not to exploit any possible oil deposits himself or to 'entertain overtures' regarding them from any quarter without British approval. Bahrain has been described as 'the strategic centre for Britain's position in the Gulf.' It is the seat of the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, and of the Political Agent for Bahrain with his assistants. The Shaikh also employs British nationals in various capacities in his Government, the most senior of whom, Sir Charles Belgrave, has been financial adviser to the Government since 1926, and has rendered it services that are deeply appreciated.

Bahrain was the first assembly point of the British Expeditionary Force which in 1914 opened the Mesopotamian Campaign, and in 1935 it became the principal British naval base in the Gulf after the abandonment of Henjam on the Persian coast. In the Second World War it was once bombed ineffectively by Italian aircraft. The ruling family of Bahrain, the al-Khalifa family, trace their origin to a tribe from which the Saudis of Saudi Arabia and the as-Subah family of Kuwait are also descended. They have ruled the island since the eighteenth century. During the nineteen years (1923–42) of the rule of the late Shaikh Hamad, Bahrain was transformed into the neat modern state that it is today. Under the present ruler, Shaikh Sir Salman ibn Hamad al-Khalifa, who acceded in 1942, it is undergoing many further developments thanks to increases in the state's share of its revenue from oil. One-third of these earnings are paid to the Shaikh and two-thirds to the state.

Oil

471 In December 1925 the first oil concession to be granted on the Arab side of the Gulf was given to a British syndicate to prospect in Bahrain. In 1927 an American concern secured an option from the British syndicate, but, hampered by the so-

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behaviour of the Turkish authorities, temporarily transferred its agency from Basra to Kuwait.*

A number of years previously the Al Khalifa, one of the clans that had settled at Kuwait earlier in the century, had amicably seceded and had temporarily taken up its abode at Zubara on the Qatar peninsula, in order to be nearer the main pearling banks. In 1783 the Al Khalifa, with the aid of the Shaikh of Kuwait, seized the Bahrain islands from Persia and established their rule, which, except for a short intermission in the opening years of the nineteenth century, has lasted to this day.

K 175 [312]

Danger from the Wahhabis

Both in the late eighteenth century and in the first half of the succeeding one, Kuwait was repeatedly threatened by the fierce and warlike Wahhabi zealots, a danger that was to recur in quite recent times. When Harford Jones (later Sir Harford Jones Brydges) was at Kuwait in 1792-3 there were almost daily alarms, and there was in consequence often difficulty in drawing drinking water from the wells situated just to the south-west of the town (those within the town yielded only brackish water). The wall surrounding Kuwait was then in a ruinous state, but the Wahhabis were deterred from pressing home their attacks partly because of the presence of a small guard of Indian sepoys at the British factory and of a cruiser belonging to the Company that was anchored off the town, and partly because of the Shaikh's possession of a large cannon. On one occasion a single discharge from this cumbrous weapon bloodlessly put to flight a body of 500 Wahhabis.

K 175

In those days the shipping of Kuwait, like that of other places in the Gulf, was often preyed upon by pirates. One of the most notorious freebooters of all time in the Gulf was Rahmat ibn Jabir; he was a native of Kuwait and flourished in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. He did not exclude the shipping of his own birthplace from his unwelcome attentions.†

When J. G. Stocqueler visited Kuwait in 1831 the town had declined considerably in importance, and he estimated its population at no more than 4,000.

In those days Kuwait, like other small States on the fringes of the then far-flung Turkish Empire, often paid only nominal allegiance to the Sultan. The Shaikh sometimes recognized Turkish suzerainty by the payment of tribute, but there were times when these payments were discontinued and independence was almost complete.

K 175

Kuwait increases in Importance: 1840-1860

The decline in the fortunes of the town proved to be only temporary, and by 1860 or so it had more than made up the lost ground. Palgrave,

* Late in 1821 the British Residency at Basra (the Agency had become a Residency in 1798) was, for similar reasons, temporarily transferred to Kuwait.

† For details of the career of this formidable ruffian, see J. S. Buckingham's *Travels in Assyria, Media and Persia*, pp. 356-358, and Francis Warden's *Sketch of the Proceedings (from 1809 to 1818) of Rahmah Bin Jaubir, Chief of Khor Hassan*, and its continuation by Lieutenant S. Hennell in Bombay *Selections*, vol. xxiv, pp. 522-528.